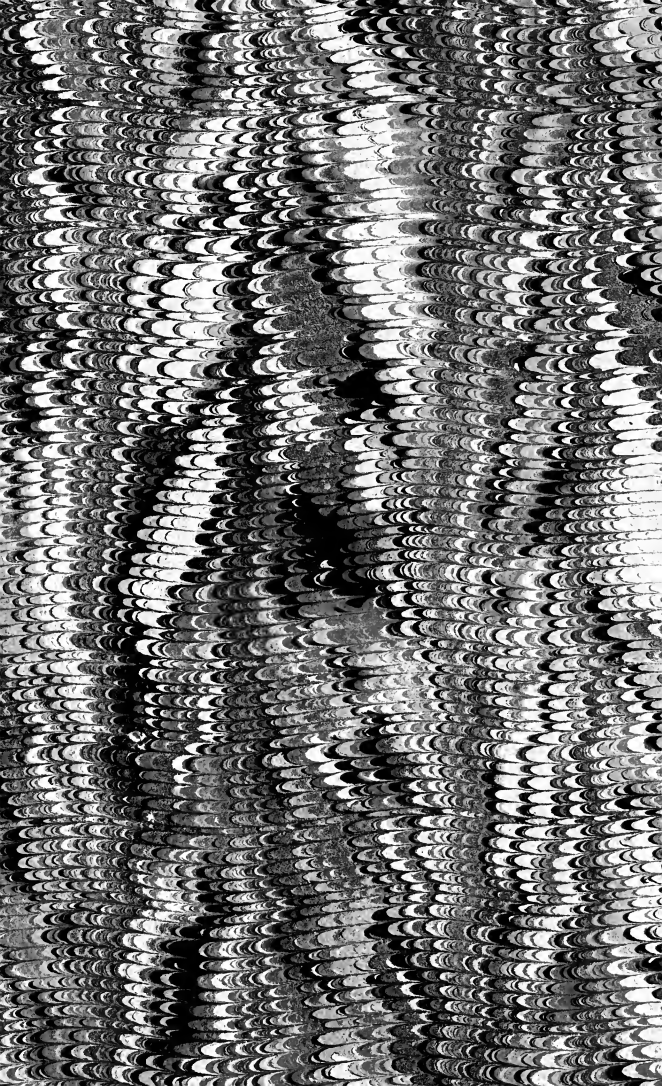
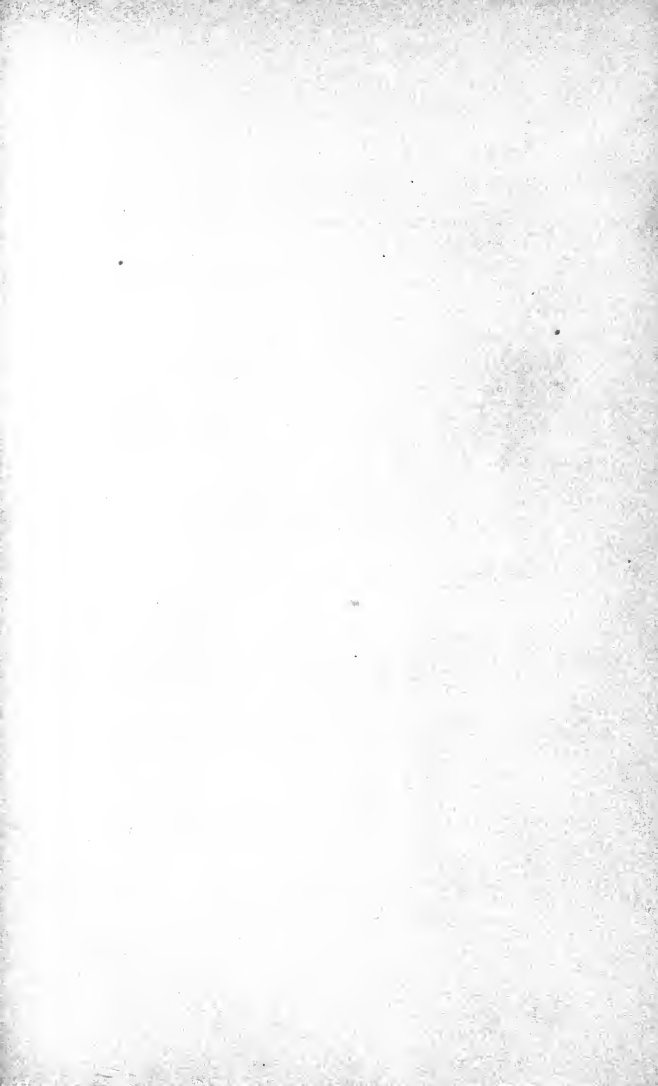


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ZÓPHIËL.

•

LONDON:

C. AND W. REYNELL, PRINTERS, BROAD STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE.

ZÓPHIËL;

OR,

THE BRIDE OF SEVEN.

BY

LORENA, OF

MARÍA DEL OCCIDENTE, *pseud.*

Mrs. Maria Gowen Brooks
"

BOSTON :

CARTER AND HENDEE.

1833.

TO
ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

OH! laurel'd bard, how can I part,
Those cheering smiles no more to see,
Until my soothed and solaced heart
Pours forth one grateful lay to thee ?

Fair virtue tuned thy youthful breath,
And peace and pleasure bless thee now ;
For love and beauty guard the wreath
That blooms upon thy manly brow.

The Indian, leaning on his bow,
On hostile cliff, in desert drear,
Cast with less joy his glance below,
When came some friendly warrior near ;

The native dove of that warm isle
Where oft, with flowers, my lyre was drest,
Sees with less joy the sun awhile
When vertic rains have drenched her nest,

Than I, a stranger, first beheld
 Thine eye's harmonious welcome given
 With gentle word which, as it swell'd,
 Came to my heart benign as heaven.

Soft be thy sleep as mists that rest
 On Skiddaw's top at summer morn;
 Smooth be thy days as Derwent's breast,
 When summer light is almost gone!

And yet, for thee why breathe a prayer?
 I deem thy fate is given in trust
 To seraphs, who by daily care,
 Would prove that heaven is not unjust.

And treasured shall thine image be
 In memory's purest, holiest shrine,
 While truth and honour glow in thee,
 Or life's warm quivering pulse is mine.

Keswick, April 18, 1831.

PREFACE.

IN finishing *Zóphiël*, the writer has endeavoured to adhere entirely to that belief (once prevalent among the fathers of the Greek and Roman churches), which supposes that the oracles of antiquity were delivered by *dæmons* or fallen angels, who wandered about the earth, formed attachments to such mortals as pleased them best, and caused themselves, in many places, to be adored as divinities.

In endeavouring to give authority for the incidents of the story, all quotations from the sacred writings have been scrupulously avoided ; and the beings introduced are to be considered only as *Phœbus*, *Zephyr*, &c. under other names.

Most of the systems of ancient philosophy, either Western or Oriental, suppose beings similar to the angels of the fathers, and differ from the Mosaic account only in

being more full and explicit. Justin Martyr and others supposed that even Homer borrowed from Hebraic records and traditions, and found in his writings the creation of the world, the tower of Babel, and the angels cast out of heaven. Hesiod's beautiful allegory of "Love calling order from chaos,"* may, it is said, be traced to the same source.

The fact of the actual existence of such beings as angels are represented, it is for others to question : according to all that is related of them, they are creatures superior in power, but endued with wishes and propensities nearly resembling those of mortals ; and, in their attributes, corresponding almost entirely with those deities which they are thought, by the fathers, to have personated, and which have ever been a subject for poetry and fable.

* Vide Brucker's *Historia Philosophiæ*.

CANTO FIRST.

GROVE OF ACACIAS.

ARGUMENT.

Invocation.—Birth and description of Egla.—Egla, alone in her Grove of Acacias, is visited by Sephora, relates an event that took place in her childhood, and reluctantly consents to receive Meles in marriage.—Zophiel sees Egla asleep and becomes enamoured of her.—Egla is wedded to Meles, and retires to the bridal chamber.—Zophiel presents himself to Egla, offers her jewels, declares himself her lover, and accuses Meles of crimes.—Egla becomes afraid and refuses to listen to Zophiel, who disappears.—Meles enters, approaches the couch, and dies suddenly.

CANTO FIRST.

GROVE OF ACACIAS.

I.

SHADE of Columbus, here thy relics rest ;
Here, while these numbers to the desert ring,
The self-same breeze that passes o'er thy breast, (1)
Salutes me, as with panting heart, I sing.

II.

Madoc ! my ancient father's bones repose
Where their bold harps thy country's bards en-
wreathed ; (2)
And this warm blood once coursed the veins of those
Who flourished where thy first faint sigh was breathed.

III.

Heroes departed both, if still ye love
These realms to which on earth, ye oped the way,
Amid the joys that crown your deeds, above,
One moment pause and deign to bless my lay !

IV.

Spirits, who hovered o'er Euphrates' stream,
 When the first beauteous mother of our race
 First oped her mild eyes to the new light-beam,
 And in the lucid wave first saw her own fair face ;

Did then yon ocean, in its bosom press
 These western solitudes ? or are they new
 Only to men ? Was this sweet wilderness,
 This distant world, then visited by you ?

V.

If ye then knew ; or haply, if ye here
 Come wandering now, oh, listen ! nor refuse
 Your unseen harps a moment to my ear ;
 Of one like you I'd sing : whisper my trembling muse !

VI.

Rest in my wild retreat ! The solar fires
 Tell on this glowing cheek their fervid powers ;
 Yet 'tis the ocean's breath my lip respires
 Grown fragrant in its course o'er thousand shrubs and
 flowers.

VII.

The time has been ;—this holiest records tell,—
 When restless spirits raised a war in heaven ;
 Great was the crime, and banished thence they fell
 To depths unknown ; yet kept the potency, given

For nobler use, to tempt the hapless race
Of feeble mortals, that but form a grade
'Twixt spirits and the courser of the chase.
Man, thing of heaven and earth, why, thou wert made,

Ev'n spirits knew not ! yet they loved to sport
With thy mysterious mind ; and lent their powers,
The good to benefit, the ill to hurt.
Dark fiends assailed thee, in thy dangerous hours,

But better angels thy far perils eyed ;
And often, when in heaven they might have stayed,
Came down to watch by some just hero's side,
Or meet the aspiring love of some high-gifted maid.

VIII.

Blest were those days ! Can these dull ages boast
Aught to compare ? though now no more beguile,
Chained in their darkling depths, the infernal host ;*
Who would not brave a fiend to share an angel's smile ?

* From the cessation of oracles, at the death of the Founder of our religion, the old Christian fathers inferred that the demons who uttered them, were at that time confined.

IX.

'Twas then there lived a captive Hebrew pair ;
In woe the embraces of their youth had past ;
And blest their paler years one daughter ; fair
She flourished, like a lonely rose, the last

And loveliest of her line. The tear of joy,
The early love of song, the sigh that broke
From her young lip, the best beloved employ ;
What womanhood disclosed, in infancy bespoke

X.

A child of passion : tenderest and best
Of all that heart has inly loved and felt,
Adorned the fair enclosure of her breast :
Where passion is not found, no virtue ever dwelt.

XI.

Yet, not, perverted, would my words imply
The impulse given by Heaven's great Artisan
Alike to man and worm, mere spring, whereby
The distant wheels of life, while time endures, roll on :

But the collective attributes that fill,
About the soul, their all-important place ;
That feed her fires, empower her fainting will,
And write the God on feeble mortal's face.

XII.

Yet anger, or revenge, envy or hate,
 The damsel knew not: when her bosom burned
 And injury darkened the decrees of fate;
 She had more piteous sighed to see that pain returned.

XIII.

Or if, perchance, though formed most just and pure,
 Amid their virtue's wild luxuriance hid,
 Such germs, all mortal bosoms must inure
 Which sometimes show their poisonous heads, unbid,—

If, haply such the fair Judean finds,
 Self knowledge wept the abasing truth to know;
 And innate Pride, that queen of noble minds,
 Crushed them indignant ere a bud could grow.

XIV.

And such, even now, in earliest youth are seen;
 But would they live, with armour more deform
 Their breasts made soft by too much love must screen:—
 “The bird that sweetest sings can least endure the
 storm.”

XV.

And yet, despite of all, the starting tear,
 The melting tone, the blood suffusive, proved,
 The soul that in them spoke, could spurn at fear
 Of death or danger; and had those she loved

Required it at their need, she could have stood,
Unmoved, as some fair-sculptured statue, while
The dome that guards it earth's convulsions rude
Are shivering, meeting ruin with a smile.

XVI.

And this at intervals in language bright
Told her blue eyes ; though oft the tender lid
Drooped like a noon-day lily, languid, white—
And trembling all save love and lustre hid ;

Then, as young christian bard had sung, they seemed
Like some Madonna in his soul, so sainted ;
But opening in their energy they beamed
As tasteful Grecians their Minerva painted ;

While o'er her graceful shoulder's milky swell,
Silky as those on little children seen,
Yet thick as Indian fleece her ringlets fell,
Nor owned Pactolus' sands a brighter sheen.

XVI.

And now, full near, the hour unwished for drew,
When fond Sephora hoped to see her wed ;
And, for 'twould else expire, impatient grew
To renovate her race from beauteous Egla's bed.

XVII.

None of their kindred lived to claim her hand,
But stranger-youths had asked her of her sire
With gifts and promise fair : he could withstand
All save her tears ; and harkening her desire

Still left her free ; but soon her mother drew
From her a vow, that when the twentieth year*
Its full fair finish o'er her beauty threw,
If what her fancy fed on, came not near,

She would entreat no more, but to the voice
Of her light-giver hearken ; and her life
And love, all yielding to that kindly choice,
Would hush each idle wish and learn to be a wife.

XVIII.

Now oft it happ'd, when morning task was done,
And lotted out, for every household maid,
Her light and pleasant toil ; ere yet the sun
Was high, fair Egla to a woody shade,

* Twenty years, among the Spartans, was the age required by the law for the marriage of women ; and in whatever climate they may live, it is seldom that they attain their full height and proportion before that age. If this custom of the Spartans could be everywhere observed, it is probable the strength and beauty of the race would be improved by it.

Loved to retire. Acacias here inclined
Their friendly heads, in thick profusion, planted,
And with a thousand tendrils clasped and twined;
And when at fervid noon all nature panted,

Enwoven with their boughs, a fragrant bower
Inviting rest its mossy pillow flung;
And here the full cerulean passion-flower,
Climbing among the leaves, its mystic symbols hung. (3)

XIX.

And though the sun had gained his utmost height,
Just as he oped its vivid folds at dawn,
Looked still, that tenderest, frailest child of light,
By shepherds named "the glory of the morn."

XX.

Sweet flower, thou'rt lovelier even than the rose:
The rose is pleasure,—felt and known as such—
Soon past, but real,—tasted, while it glows;
But thou, too bright and pure for mortal touch,

Art like those brilliant things we never taste
Or see, unless with Fancy's lip and eye,
When maddened by her mystic spells, we waste
Life on a thought, and rob reality.

XXI.

Here, too, the lily raised its snow-white head ;
And myrtle leaves, like friendship, when sincere,
Most sweet when wounded, all around were spread ;
And though from noon's fierce heat the wild deer fled,
A soft warm twilight reigned impervious here.

XXII.

Tranquil and lone in such a light to be,
How sweet to sense and soul ! the form recline
Forgets it e'er felt pain ; and Reverie,
Sweet mother of the muses, heart and soul are thine !*

XXIII.

This calm retreat on summer day she sought,
And sat to tune her lute ; but all night long
Quiet had from her pillow flown, and thought,
Feverish and tired, sent forth unseemly throng

* It is impossible for those who never felt it, to conceive the effect of such a situation in a warm climate. In this island, the woods, which are naturally so interwoven with vines, as to be impervious to a human being, are, in some places, cleared and converted into nurseries, for the young coffee-trees, which remain sheltered from the sun and wind, till sufficiently grown to transplant. To enter one of these "semilleros," as they are here called, at noonday, produces an effect like that anciently ascribed to the waters of Lethe. After sitting down upon the trunk of a fallen cedar or palm-tree, and breathing for a moment the freshness of the air and the odour of the passion-flower, which is one of the

Of boding images. She scarce could woo
One song reluctant, ere advancing quick
Through the fresh leaves, Sephora's form she knew,
And duteous rose to meet : but fainting, sick,

Her heart sank tremulously in her ; why
Sought out at such an hour, it half divined ;
And seated now beside, with downcast eye,
And throbbing pulse she met the pressure kind,

And warmly given ; while thus the matron fair,
Though marred by grief and time, with soothing word,
Solicitous, and gently serious air,
The purpose why she hither came preferr'd.

most abundant, and certainly the most beautiful of the climate ; the noise of the trees, which are continually kept in motion by the trade winds ; the fluttering and various notes (though not musical) of the birds ; the loftiness of the green canopy, for the trunks of the trees are bare to a great height, and seem like pillars supporting the thick mass of leaves above ; and the soft peculiar light which the intense ray of the sun, thus impeded, produces ; have altogether such an effect, that one seems involuntarily to forget everything but the present, and it requires a strong effort to rise and leave the place.

XXIV.

“ Eglā, my hopes thou knowest, though exprest
Not oft, lest they should pain thee ; I have dealt
Not rudely with thy fancies, yet my breast
Retains the wish most vehemently felt.

“ Know, I have marked that when the reason why
Thou still wouldst live in virgin state, thy sire
Has prest thee to impart, quick in thine eye
Semblance of hope has played ; fain to transpire,

“ Words seemed to seek thy lip ; but the bright rush
Of heart-blood eloquent, alone would tell
In the warm language of a rebel blush
What thy less treacherous tongue had guarded well.

XXV.

“ Is the long frequent day spent lonely here ?
Or haply, rather, hath some stranger youth—?
Then Eglā ; see my heart ! ” “ Oh, mother dear,
Distrust my wisdom ; but regard my truth !

XXVI.

“ Long time ago, while yet a twelve year’s child,
These shrubs and vines new-planted near this spot,
I sat me, tired with pleasant toil, and whiled
Away the time, with lute ; and often thought

“ Of the lost land thou lovest ; every scene
Which thou so oft, when I had climbed thy knee,
Wouldst sing of, weeping, through my mind had been
In fair succession, when from yon old tree

“ I heard a piteous moan. Wondering I went
And found an aged man ; worn and oppressed
He seemed with toil ; and said in whispers faint,
‘ Oh, little maiden, how I am distrest !

“ ‘ I sink for very want. Give me, I pray,
A drop of water and a cake : I die
Of thirst and hunger ; yet my sorrowing way
May tread once more, if thou my need supply.’

XXVII.

“ A long time missing from thy gentle arms,
It chanced that day was sent me, in the shade,
New bread, a cake of figs, and wine of palms,*
Mingled with water, sweet with honey made.

* “ The palm is a very common plant in this country (Media), and generally fruitful : this they cultivate like fig-trees, and it produces them bread, wine, and honey.” See Beloe’s notes to his translation of Herodotus. Mr Gibbon adds, that the diligent

XXVIII.

“ These brought I to him ; tried to raise his head ;
 Held to his lip the cup ; and, while he quaffed,
 Upon my garment wiped the tears that sped
 Adown his silvery beard, and mingled with the draught.

XXIX.

“ When, gaining sudden strength, he raised his hand,
 And in this guise did bless me ; ‘ Mayst thou be
 A crown to him who weds thee ! ’ In a land
 Far distant dwells a captive !—Hearken me,

“ ‘ And chuse thee now a bridegroom meet. To-day
 O’er broad Euphrates’ steepest banks a child
 Fled from his youthful nurse’s arms ; in play
 Elate, he bent him o’er the brink, and smiled

“ ‘ To see their fears who followed him ; but who
 The keen wild anguish of that scene can tell !
 He bent him o’er the brink ; and, in their view,
 But ah ! too far beyond their aid, he fell.

natives celebrated, either in verse or prose, three hundred and sixty uses to which the trunk, the branches, the leaves, the juice, and the whole of this plant were applied. Nothing can be more curious and interesting than the natural history of the palm tree.

XXX.

“‘They wailed; the long torn ringlets of their hair

Bestrewed the ambient gale; deep rolled the stream
And swallowed the fair child; no succour there! *

They, women;—whither look?—who to redeem

* The women, among all the nations of antiquity, were accustomed to express violent grief, by tearing their hair. This must have been a great and affecting sacrifice to the object bemoaned, as they considered it a part of themselves, and absolutely essential to their beauty. Fine hair has been a subject of commendation among all people, and particularly the ancients. Cyrus, when he went to visit his uncle Astyages, found him with his eyelashes coloured and decorated with false locks; the first Cæsar obtained permission to wear the laurel wreath, in order to conceal the bareness of his temples. The quantity and beauty of the hair of Absalom, is commemorated in holy writ. The modern oriental ladies also set the greatest value on their hair, which they braid and perfume. Thus the poet Hafiz, whom Sir William Jones styles the Anacreon of Persia.

“These locks, each curl of which is worth a hundred musk-bags of China, would be sweet indeed, if their scent proceeded from sweetness of temper.”

And again, “When the breeze shall waft the fragrance of thy locks over the tomb of Hafiz, a thousand flowers shall spring from out the earth that hides his corse.”

Achilles clipped his yellow locks, and then threw them as a sacrifice upon the funeral pyre of Patroclus. The women of the Aborigines of America cut off locks of their long black hair, and strew them upon the graves of their husbands.

“ ‘ What the fierce waves were preying on ? When lo !
Approached a stranger boy. Aside he flung,
Quick as a thought, his quiver and his bow,
And parted by his limbs the sparkling billows sung.

XXXI.

“ ‘ They clung to an old palm and watched ; nor breath
Nor word dared utter ; while the refluent blood
Left on each countenance the hue of death,
Oped lip and far-strained eye spoke worse than death
endured.

XXXII.

“ ‘ But down the flood the dauntless boy appeared,
Now rising—plunging—in the eddy whirled—
Mastering his course ; but now a rock he neared ;
And closing o’er his head, the dark, deep, waters curled.

XXXIII.

“ ‘ Then Hope groaned forth her last, and to despair
Yielded with shrieks ; but ere the echo wild
Had ceased to thrill, restored to light and air,
He climbs, he gains the rock, and holds alive the child.

XXXIV.

“ ‘ Now mark what chanced ! that infant was the son
Of Babylon’s great sovereign ; soon was placed
Before his throne the youth who so had won
From death the royal heir. A captive graced

“ ‘ All o’er with nature’s gifts just dawning, brave,
And panting for renown, blushing and praised
The stripling stood ; and closely prest, would crave
Nought but a place mid warlike men ; yet raised

“ ‘ To his full wish, the kingly presence leaving,
So light with airy hope, his graceful feet
Scarce touched the marble as he trod, while, heaving
With plans to please his sire, his heart more warmly
beat.

XXXV.

“ ‘ But when his mother heard, she wept, and said,
If he, our only child, be far away,
Or slain in war, how shall our years be stay’d ?
Friendless and old, where is the hand to lay

“ ‘ Our white hairs in the earth ? So when her fears
He saw would not be calmed, he did not part ;
But lived in low estate to dry her tears,
And crush’d the full ripe wish at his exulting heart.’

XXXVI.

“ The old man ceased ; ere I could speak, his face
Grew more than mortal fair : a mellow light
Mantling around him, filled the shady place,
And while I wondering stood, he vanish’d from my
sight.

XXXVII.

“ This I had told, but shame withheld, and fear
Thou’dst deem some spirit guiled me,—disapprove,—
Perchance forbid my customary wandering here.
But whencesoe’er the vision, I have strove

“ Still vainly to forget. I’ve heard thee mourn
Kindred afar, and captive :—oh ! my mother
Should he, my heaven announced, exist, return—
And meet me here, lost—wedded to another !”

XXXVIII.

Then thus Sephora : “ In the city where
Our distant kindred dwelt, blood has been shed.
Fond dreamer, had thy visioned love been there !
Ere now he’s sleeping with the silent dead.

XXXIX.

“ Or doth he live, he knows not—would not know,
(Thralled, dead to thee, in some fair Syrian’s arms,)
Who pines for him afar in fruitless woe,
And wastes upon a thought love, life, and charms.

XL.

“ ’Tis as a vine of Galilee should say,
Culturer, I reckon not thy support, I sigh
For a young palm tree of Euphrates ; nay,
Or let me him entwine, or in my blossom die.

XLI.

“ Thy heart is set on joys it ne’er can prove ;
And, panting ingrate, scorns the blessings given.
Hope not from dust-formed man, a seraph’s love,
Or days on earth like to the days of heaven !

XLII.

“ But to my theme ; maiden, a lord for thee,
And not of thee unworthy, lives and glows.
Nay, chase the dread that in thy looks I see,
Nor make it task of auguish to disclose

XLIII.

“ What well might be delight ! Rememberest thou
When to the altar, by thy father reared,
As we went forth with sacrifice and vow,
A victim-dove escaped, and there appeared

XLIV.

“ A stranger ? Quickly from his shrilly string
He let an arrow glance ; and to a tree
Nailed fast the little tenant, by the wing,
And brought it, scarcely bleeding, back to thee.

XLV.

“ His voice, his mien, the lustre of his eye,
And pretty deed he had done, were theme of praise ;
Though blent with fear that stranger should espy
Thy lonely haunts. When, in the sunny rays

“ He turned and went, with black locks clustering bright
Around his pillar neck,—‘ ’Tis pity he,’
Thou said’st, ‘ in all the comeliness and might
Of perfect man, ’tis pity he should be

“ ‘ But an idolater ! How nobly sweet
He tempers pride with courtesy ! A flower
Drops honey when he speaks. His sandal’d feet
Are light as antelope. He stands, a tower.’

XLIV.

“ That very stranger sought thy sire, and swore
For thee much love ; that day conceived for thee,
To be a false idolater no more.
’Tis Meles, late returned from embassy

“ To distant courts, and loved by the young king
Of Media. Bethink thee, Egla ; muse
Upon the good, union like this may bring
On thee and thine. Yet, if thy soul refuse,

“ We will not press thee. Weep, if ’t be thy will,
Even on the breast that nourished thee, and ne’er
Distress thee or compelled ; this bosom still,
E’en shouldst thou blight its dearest hopes, will share,

“Nay, bear thy pains. But sooner in the grave
’Twill quench my waning years, if reckless thou
Of what I not command, but only crave,
Canst see me pine, and disregard thy vow.

XLV.

Then, Egla, “Think not, kindest, I forget,
Who have received such love, how much is due
From me to thee! The Mede I’ll wed: but yet—
Why will these tears gush forth? — thus—in thy
presence too!”

XLVI.

Sephora held her to her heart, the while
Grief had its way; then saw her gently laid,
And bade her, kissing her blue eyes, beguile
Slumbering, the fervid noon. Her leafy bed

Breathed forth o’erpowering sighs; increased the heat;
Sleepless had been the night; her weary sense
Could now no more. Lone in the still retreat,
Wounding the flowers to sweetness more intense

She sank. Thus kindly Nature lets our woe
Swell till it bursts forth from the o’erfraught breast;
Then draws an opiate from the bitter flow,
And lays her sorrowing child soft in the lap of rest.

XLVII.

Now all the mortal maid lies indolent ;
Save one sweet cheek, which the cool velvet turf
Had touched too rude, though all with blooms besprent,
One soft arm pillowed. Whiter than the surf

That foams against the sea-rock looked her neck
By the dark, glossy, odorous shrubs relieved,
That close inclining o'er her, seemed to reck
What 'twas they canopied ; and quickly heaved, (4)

Beneath her robe's white folds and azure zone,
Her heart yet incomposed ; a fillet through
Peeped softly azure, while with tender moan,
As if of bliss, Zephyr her ringlets blew

Sportive ; about her neck their gold he twined ;
Kissed the soft violet on her temples warm,
And eyebrow just so dark might well define
Its flexile arch ; throne of expression's charm.

XLVIII.

As the vexed Caspian, though its rage be past,
And the blue smiling heavens swell o'er in peace,
Shook to the centre by the recent blast,
Heaves on tumultuous still, and hath not power to cease ;

So still each little pulse was seen to throb,
Though passion and its pain were lulled to rest ;
And ever and anon a piteous sob
Shook the pure arch expansive e'er her breast.*

XLIX.

Save that, a perfect peace was, sovereign, there
O'er fragrance, sound, and beauty ; all was mute ;
Only a dove bemoaned her absent phere,
Or fainting breezes swept the slumberer's lute.

L.

It chanced, that day, lured by the verdure, came
Zóphiël, a spirit sometimes ill ; but ere
He fell, a heavenly angel. The faint flame
Of dying embers on an altar, where

Zoroh, fair Egla's sire, in secret bowed
And sacrificed to the great unseen God, (5)
While friendly shades the sacred rites enshroud,
The spirit saw ; his inmost soul was awed,

* Everyone must have observed this effect in little children who, for several hours after they have cried themselves to sleep, and sometimes, even, when a smile is on their lips, are heard from time to time to sob.

And he bethought him of the forfeit joys
Once his in Heaven ; deep in a darkling grot
He sat him down ; the melancholy noise
Of leaf and creeping vine accordant with his thought.

LI.

When fiercer spirits howled, he but complained (6)
Ere yet 'twas his to roam the pleasant earth.
His heaven-invented harp he still retained,
Though tuned to bliss no more ; and had its birth

Of him, beneath some black, infernal clift,
The first drear song of woe ; and torment wrung
The restless spirit less, when he might lift
His plaining voice, and frame the like as now he sung.

LII.

“ Woe to thee, wild ambition ! I employ
Despair's low notes thy dread effects to tell ;
Born in high Heaven, her peace thou couldst destroy ;
And, but for thee, there had not been a Hell.

“ Through the celestial domes thy clarion pealed ;
Angels, entranced, beneath thy banners ranged,
And straight were fiends ; hurled from the shrinking field,
They waked in agony to wail the change.

“ Darting through all her veins the subtle fire,
The world’s fair mistress first inhaled thy breath ;
To lot of higher beings learnt to aspire ;
Dared to attempt, and doomed the world to death.

“ The thousand wild desires, that still torment
The fiercely struggling soul, where peace once dwelt,
But perished ; feverish hope ; drear discontent,
Impoisoning all possest,—Oh ! I have felt

“ As spirits feel,—yet not for man we mourn,
Scarce o’er the silly bird in state were he,
That builds his nest, loves, sings the morn’s return,
And sleeps at evening ; save by aid of thee.

“ Fame ne’er had roused, nor song her records kept ;
The gem, the ore, the marble breathing life,
The pencil’s colours, all in earth had slept,
Now see them mark with death his victim’s strife.

“ Man found thee, death : but Death and dull decay,
Baffling, by aid of thee, his mastery proves ;
By mighty works he swells his narrow day,
And reigns, for ages, on the world he loves.

“ Yet what the price ? With stings that never cease
Thou goad'st him on ; and when too keen the
smart,
His highest dole he'd barter but for peace,
Food thou wilt have, or feast upon his heart.”

LIII.

Thus Zóphiël still, though now the infernal crew
Had gained, by sin, a privilege in the world,
Allayed their torments in the cool night dew,
And by the dim star-light again their wings un-
furled.

LIV.

And now, regretful of the joys his birth
Had promised, deserts, mounts, and streams he
crost,
To find, amid the loveliest spots of earth,
Faint semblance of the heaven he had lost.

LV.

And oft, by unsuccessful searching pained,
Weary he fainted through the toilsome hours ;
And then his mystic nature he sustained
On steam of sacrifices, breath of flowers. (7)

LVI.

Sometimes he gave out oracles, amused (8)
With mortal folly ; resting on the shrines,
Or, all in some fair Sybyl's form infused,
Spoke from her trembling lips, or traced her mystic
lines.*

LVII.

And now he wanders on from glade to glade
To where more precious shrubs diffuse their balms ;
And gliding through the thickly-woven shade
Where the soft captive lay in all her charms,

He caught a glimpse. The colours in her face,
Her bare white arms, her lips, her shining hair,
Burst on his view. He would have flown the place ;
Fearing some faithful angel rested there,

Who'd see him, 'reft of glory, lost to bliss,
Wandering, and miserably panting, fain
To glean a joy e'en from a place like this :
The thought of what he once had been was pain

* The identity of Zóphiël with Apollo will be perceived in this and other passages.

.XIII.

Ineffable. But what assailed his ear?

A sigh ! Surprised, another glance he took ;
Then doubting—fearing—gradual coming near—
He ventured to her side and dared to look ;

Whispering, “ Yes, ’tis of earth ! So, new-found life
Refreshing, looked sweet Eve, with purpose fell,
When first sin’s sovereign gazed on her, and strife
Had with his heart, that grieved with arts of hell,

Stern as it was, to win her o’er to death.

Most beautiful of all in earth or heaven !

“ Oh, could I quaff for aye that fragrant breath !
Couldst thou, or being like to thee, be given

“ To bloom for ever for me thus ! Still true
To one dear theme, my full soul, flowing o’er,
Would find no room for thought of what it knew,
Nor picturing forfeit transport, curse me more. (9)

LVIII.

“ But, oh ! severest curse ! I cannot be
In what I love, blest e’en the little span,
(With all a spirit’s keen capacity
For bliss) permitted the poor insect, man.

LIX.

“ The few I’ve seen, and deemed of worth to win,
Like some sweet floweret, mildewed in my arms,
Withered to hideousness as foul as sin,
Grew fearful hags ; and then, with potent charm

“ Of muttered word and harmful drug, did learn
To force me to their will. Down the damp grave,
Loathing I went, at Endor, and uptorn,
Brought back the dead ; when tortured Saul did crave

“ To view his lowering fate. Fair, nay, as this
Young slumberer, that dread witch ; when, I arrayed
In lovely shape, to meet my guileful kiss
She yielded first her lip. And thou, sweet maid—
What is’t I see ?—a recent tear has strayed,
And left its stain upon her cheek of bliss.

LX.

“ She has fall’n to sleep in grief ; haply been chid,
Or by rude mortal wrong’d. So let it prove
Meet for my purpose : ’mid these blossoms hid,
I’ll gaze ; and when she wakes, with all that love

“ And art can lend, come forth. He who would gain
A fond, full heart, in love’s soft surgery skill’d,
Should seek it when ’tis sore ; allay its pain
With balm by pity prest : ’tis all his own so heal’d.

LXI.

“ She may be mine a little year ; ev’n fair
And sweet as now. Oh ! respite ! while possesst
I lose the dismal sense of my despair :
But then—I will not think upon the rest !

LXII.

“ And wherefore grieve to cloud her little day *
Of fleeting life ? What doom from power divine
I bear eternally : pity—away !
Wake, pretty fly ! and, while thou mayst, be mine,

“ ’Though but an hour ; so thou supply’st thy looms
With shining silk, and in the cruel snare
See’st the fond bird entrapped, but for his plumes,
To work thy robes, or twine amidst thy hair.”

LXIII.

To whisper softly in her ear he bent,
But draws him back restrained : a higher power,
That loved her, and would keep her innocent,
Repelled his evil touch. And from her bower,

* Zóphiël, being one of the angels who fell before the Creation was completed, is not supposed to know anything of the immortality of the souls of men.

To lead the maid, Sephora comes; the sprite,
Half baffled, followed, hovering on unseen,
Till Meles, fair to see and nobly dight,
Received his pensive bride. Gentle of mien,

She meekly stood. He fastened round her arms
Rings of refulgent ore; low and apart
Murmuring, "So, beauteous captive, shall thy charms
For ever thrall and clasp thy captive's heart."

LXIV.

The air's light touch seemed softer as she moved,
In languid resignation; his quick eye
Spoke in black glances how she was approved,
Who shrank reluctant from its ardency.

LXV.

'Twas sweet to look upon the goodly pair;
In their contrasted loveliness: her height
Might almost vie with his, but heavenly fair,
Of soft proportion she, and sunny hair;
He cast in manliest mould, with ringlets murk as night.

LXVI.

And oft her drooping and resigned blue eye
She'd wistful raise to read his radiant face;
But then, why shrunk her heart?—a secret sigh
Told her it most required what there it could not trace.

LXVII.

Now fair had fall'n the night. The damsel mused

At her own window, in the pearly ray
Of the full moon; her thoughtful soul infused

Thus in her words;* left lone awhile to pray.

LXVIII.

“What bliss for her who lives her little day,

In blest obedience, like to those divine,

Who to her loved, her earthly lord can say,

‘God is thy law,’ most just, ‘and thou art mine.’

“To every blast she bends in beauty meek;—

Let the storm beat,—his arms her shelter kind,—

And feels no need to blanch her rosy cheek

With thoughts befitting his superior mind.

“Who only sorrows when she sees him pained,

Then knows to pluck away pain’s keenest dart;

Or bid Love catch it ere its goal be gained,

And steal its venom ere it reach his heart.

* Cælestes, or the moon, was adored by many of the Jewish women, as well as the Carthaginians. They addressed their vows to her, burnt incense, poured out drink offerings, and made cakes for her with her own hands. This goddess is called, in scripture, the Queen of Heaven.

“ 'Tis the soul's food :—the fervid must adore.—
For this the heathen, unsufficed with thought,
Moulds him an idol of the glittering ore,
And shrines his smiling goddess, marble-wrought.

What bliss for her, ev'n in this world of woe,
Oh ! Sire who mak'st yon orb-strewn arch thy throne ;
That sees thee in thy noblest work below
Shine undefaced, adored, and all her own !

This I had hoped ; but hope too dear, too great,
Go to thy grave !—I feel thee blasted, now.
Give me, fate's sovereign, well to bear the fate
Thy pleasure sends ; this, my sole prayer, allow !”

LXIX.

Still fixed on heaven, her earnest eye, all dew,
Seemed, as it sought amid the lamps of night,
The God her soul addressed ; but other view
Far different, sudden from that pensive plight

Recalled her : quick as on primeval gloom
Burst the new day-star when the Eternal bid,
Appeared, and glowing filled the dusky room,
As 'twere a brilliant cloud. The form it hid

Modest emerged, as might a youth beseem ;
Save a slight scarf, his beauty bare, and white
As cygnet's bosom on some silver stream ;
Or young Narcissus, when to woo the light

Of its first morn, that flow'ret open springs ;
And near the maid he comes with timid gaze,
And gently fans her with his full-spread wings,
Transparent as the cooling gush that plays

From ivory fount. Each bright prismatic tint
Still vanishing, returning, blending, changing
About their tender mystic texture glint,
Like colours o'er the full-blown bubble ranging,

That pretty urchins launch upon the air,
And laugh to see it vanish ; yet, so bright,
More like—and even that were faint compare,
As shaped from some new rainbow. Rosy light,

Like that which Pagans say the dewy car
Precedes of their Aurora, clipp'd him round,
Retiring as he moved ; and evening's star
Shamed not the diamond coronal that bound

His curly locks. And, still to teach his face
Expression dear to her he wooed, he sought ;
And, in his hand, he held a little vase
Of virgin gold, in strange devices wrought.

LXX.

Love-toned he spoke ; “ Fair sister, art thou here
With pensive looks, so near thy bridal bed,
Fixed on the pale cold moon ? Nay, do not fear !
To do thee weal, o’er mount and stream I’ve sped.

LXXI.

“ Say, doth thy soul, in all its sweet excess,
Rush to this bridegroom, smooth and falsehood-taught ?
Ah, no ! thou yield’st thee to a feared caress ;
And strugglest with a heart that owns him not.

LXXII.

“ Send back this Meles to Euphrates :—there
Is no reluctance. Withering by that stream,
Tell him there droops a flower that needs his care.
But why, at such an hour, so base a theme ?

LXXIII.

“ I’ll tell thee secrets of the nether earth
And highest heaven ! Or dost some service crave ?
Declare thy bidding, best of mortal birth,
I’ll be thy winged messenger, thy slave.”

LXXIV.

Then softly Egla: "Lovely being, tell,
 In pity to the grief thy lips betray
 The knowledge of—say, with some kindly spell,
 Dost come from heaven to charm my pains away? *

LXXV.

"Alas! what know'st thou of my plighted lord?
 If guilt pollute him, as, unless mine ear
 Deceive me in the purport of thy word,
 Thou mean'st t' imply,—kind spirit rest not here,

"But to my father hasten, and make known
 The fearful truth: my doom is his command;
 Writ in heaven's book, I guard the oath I've sworn,
 Unless he will to blot it by thine hand."

LXXVI.

"Oaths sworn for Meles little need avail,"
 Zóphiël replies: "Ere morn, if 't be thy will,
 To Lybian deserts he shall tell his tale,
 I'll hurl him, at thy word, o'er forest, sea, and hill.

* Les Perses semble être les premiers hommes connus de nous qui parlèrent des anges comme d'huissiers célestes et de porteurs d'ordres.—*Voltaire sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations.*

LXXVII.

“ But soothe thee, maiden ; be thy soul at peace !
Mine be the care to hasten to thy sire,
And null thy vow. Let every terror cease :
Perfect success attends thy least desire.”

LXXVIII.

Then lowly bending with seraphic grace,
The vase he proffered full ; and not a gem
Drawn forth successive from its sparkling place
But put to shame the Persian diadem.

LXXIX.

While he, “ Nay, let me o’er thy white arms bind
These orient pearls, less smooth ; Egla, for thee,
My thrilling substance pained by storm and wind,
I sought them in the caverns of the sea.

LXXX.

“ Look ! here’s a ruby ; drinking solar rays,
I saw it redden on a mountain tip ;
Now on thy snowy bosom let it blaze :
’Twill blush still deeper to behold thy lip.

LXXXI.

“ Here’s for thy hair a garland ; every flower
That spreads its blossoms, watered by the tear
Of the sad slave in Babylonian bower,
Might see its frail bright hues perpetuate here.

LXXXII.

“ For morn’s light bell, this changeful amethyst ;
A sapphire for the violet’s tender blue ;
Large opals, for the queen-rose zephyr-kist ;
And here are emeralds of every hue,
For folded bud and leaflet, dropped with dew.*

LXXXIII.

“ And here’s a diamond, culled from Indian mine,
To gift a haughty queen : it might not be ;
I knew a worthier brow, sister divine,†
And brought the gem ; for well I deem for thee

* It was not unusual among the nations of the East to imitate flowers with precious stones. The Persian kings, about the time of Artaxerxes, sat, when they gave audience, under a vine, the leaves of which were formed of gold, and the grapes of emeralds. Gold is supposed by some of the Asiatics to have grown like a tree, in the garden of Eden ; and the veins of ore found in the earth still correspond to the form of branches. Shedad, in the gardens of his wonderful palace, had trees formed of gold and silver, with fruits and blossoms of precious stones. This palace, the Arabs suppose, still exists in the desert, where, though generally invisible, individuals from time to time have been indulged with a sight of it.

† Sister was an affectionate appellation used by the Hebrews to women.

“ The ‘ arch-chymic sun ’ in earth’s dark bosom
wrought
To prison thus a ray, that when dull night
Frowns o’er her realms, and nature’s all seems nought,
She whom he grieves to leave may still behold his light.”

LXXXV.

Thus spoke he on, while still the wondering maid
Gazed, as a youthful artist ; rapturously
Each perfect, smooth, harmonious limb surveyed
Insatiate still her beauty-loving eye.

LXXXVI.

For Zophiel wore a mortal form ; and blent
In mortal form, when perfect, Nature shews
Her all that’s fair enhanced ; fire, firmament,
Ocean, earth, flowers, and gems,—all there disclose
Their charms epitomised : the heavenly power
To lavish beauty, in this last work, crown’d :
And Eglā, formed of fibres such as dower
Those who most feel, forgot all else around.

LXXXVII.

He saw, and softening every wily word,
Spoke in more melting music to her soul ;
And o’er her sense, as when the fond night-bird
Woos the full rose, o’erpowering fragrance stole ; (10)

LXXXVIII.

Or when the lilies, sleepier perfume, move,
Disturbed by two young sister-fawns, that play
Among their graceful stalks at morn, and love
From their white cells to lap the dew away.

LXXXIX.

She strove to speak, but 'twas in murmurs low ;
While o'er her cheek, his potent spell confessing,
Deeper diffused the warm carnation glow
Still dewy wet with tears, her inmost soul confessing.

XC.

As the lithe reptile, in some lonely grove,
With fixed bright eye, of fascinating flame,
Lures on by slow degrees the plaining dove,
So nearer, nearer still the bride and spirit came.

XCI.

Success seemed his ; but secret, in the height
Of exultation, as he braved the power
Which baffled him at morn, a secret light
Shot from his eye, with guilt and treachery fraught.

XCII.

Nature upon her children oft bestows
The quick, untaught perception ; and while art
O'ertasks himself with guile, loves to disclose
The dark thought in the eye, to warn the o'er-trusting
heart.

XCIII.

Or haply 'twas some airy guardian foiled
The sprite. What mixed emotions shook his breast;
When her fair hand, ere he could clasp, recoiled!
The spell was broke; and doubts and terrors prest

Her sore. While Zophiel: "Meles' step I heard—
He's a betrayer!—wilt receive him still?"—
The rosy blood, driven to her heart by fear,
She said, in accents faint but firm, "I will."

XCIV.

The spirit heard; and all again was dark;
Save, as before, the melancholy flame
Of the full moon; and faint, unfrequent spark,
Which from the perfume's burning embers came,

XCV.

That stood in vases round the room disposed.
Shuddering and trembling to her couch she crept,
Soft open'd the door, and quick again was closed,
And through the pale grey moonlight Meles stept.

XCVI.

But ere he yet, with haste, could throw aside
His brodered belt and sandals,—dread to tell,
Eager he sprang—he sought to clasp his bride—
He stopt:—a groan was heard—he gasped, and fell

XCVII.

Low by the couch of her who widowed lay,
Her ivory hands, convulsive, clasped in prayer,
But lacking power to move ; and, when 'twas day,
A cold black corse was all of Meles, there.

NOTES
TO
CANTO THE FIRST.

- (1) "*The self-same breeze that passes o'er thy breast.*"

The remains of Columbus are preserved in the Cathedral at Havana, beneath a monument and bust of very rude sculpture. These stanzas were written on the same coast, about seventy miles distant.

- (2) "*Madoc, my father's ancient bones repose
Where their bold harps thy country's bards enwreathed.*"

The well-known and beautiful poem of Dr Robert Southey, which bears the name of the Welch prince, Madoc, renders it unnecessary to give any farther account of him.

- (3) "*And here the full cerulean passion-flower,
Climbing among the leaves, its mystic symbols hung.*"

Those who have only seen this flower as a curious exotic in severer climates, can have little idea of the profusion with which it grows in its native realms. It climbs from shrub to shrub, forming natural bowers, sparkling with morning dew, and looking, from its beamy shape, like a beautiful planet.

- (4) "*That close inclining o'er her, seemed to reckon
What 'twas they canopied.*"

This kind of acacia or mimosa particularly belongs to Abyssinia;

it is said to incline its branches, as if sensible when any one seeks its shade. The Arabians love it as a friend. A low species of mimosa, which grows profusely in this island (Cuba), is extremely sensitive; it not only shuts its pretty leaves, like a closed fan, when touched, but the whole branch which supports them stoops and clings closely to the main stalk.

The affection of 'Aswad' for a mimosa that bent over him in the gardens of Shedad or Irem, forms a particularly beautiful passage in Thalaba.

(5) "*While friendly shades the sacred rites enshroud.*"

The captive Hebrews, though they sometimes outwardly conformed to the religion of their oppressors, were accustomed to practice their own in secret.

(6) "*His heaven-invented harp he still retained.*"

The invention of the harp was ascribed, by the Hebraic historians, to Jubal; who, as he lived before the deluge, enjoyed, in common with others of his race, the privilege of conversing with angels, from whom he may be supposed to have received his art. That Mercury, to whom the Grecians ascribed the invention of the lyre, according to the belief of the Christian fathers, might have been the son of a guilty angel.

(7) "*Weary he fainted through the toilsome hours,
And then his mystic nature he sustained
On steam of sacrifices, breath of flowers.*"

"Eusebe dans sa 'Préparation Evangelique,' rapporte quantité de passages de Porphyre, où ce philosophe Payen assure que les mauvais démons sont les auteurs des enchantemens, des philtres, and des maléfices; que le mensonge est essentiel a leur nature; qu'ils ne font que tromper nos yeux par des spectres and par des fantômes; qu'ils excitent en nous la plupart de nos passions; qu'ils ont l'ambition de vouloir passer pour des dieux; que leurs

corps aériens se nourrissent de fumigations de sang répandu et de la graisse des sacrifices ; qu'il n'y a qu'eux qui se mêlent de rendre des oracles, et à qui cette fonction pleine de tromperie soit tombée en partage.—*Fontenelle Histoire des Oracles.*

It is related, also, in the *Caherman Nameh*, that the Peris fed upon precious odours, brought them by their companions when imprisoned and hung up in cages by the Dives.

Most of the oriental superstitions harmonize perfectly with the belief of the fathers ; and what is there in philosophy, natural or moral, to disprove the existence of beings similar to those described by the latter ?

(8) "*Sometimes he gave out oracles.*"

This passage accords with a belief prevalent in the earlier ages of Christianity, that all nations, except the descendants of Abraham, were abandoned by the Almighty, and subjected to the power of demons or evil spirits. Fontenelle, in his "*Histoire des Oracles*," makes the following extract from the works of the Pagan philosopher Porphyry:—"Auguste déjà vieux et songeant à se choisir un successeur alla consulter l'Oracle de Delphes. L'Oracle ne répondoit point, quoiqu' Auguste n' épargnât pas des sacrifices. A la fin, cependant, il en tira cette réponse. L'enfant Hebrew à qui tous les Dieux obeissent, me chasse d' ici, et me renvoie dans les Enfers. Sors de ce temple sans parler !"

(9)

"*Still true*

*To one dear theme, my full soul flowing o'er,
Would find no room for thought of what it knew,
Nor, picturing forfeit transport, curse me more."*

"Si l'homme" (says a modern writer), "constant dans ses affections, pouvoit sans cesse fournir à un sentiment renouvelé sans cesse, sans doute la solitude et l'amour l'égaleroient à Dieu même ; car ce sont là les deux éternels plaisirs du grand Etre."

Saint Theresa used to describe the Prince of Darkness as an unhappy being who never could know what it was to love.

(10) "*And o'er her sense, as when the fond night-bird,
Woos the full rose, o'erpowering fragrance stole.*"

This allusion is familiar to every one in the slightest degree acquainted with Oriental literature.

"The nightingale, if he sees the rose, becomes intoxicated; he lets go from his hands the reins of prudence." *Fable of the Gardener and Nightingale.*

Lady Montagu also translates a song, thus:

"The nightingale now hovers amid the flowers.

His passion is to seek roses."

Again, from the poet Hafiz:—

"When the roses wither, and the bower loses its sweetness,

You have no longer the tale of the nightingale."

Indeed the rose, in Oriental poetry, is seldom mentioned without her paramour, the nightingale, which gives reason to suppose that the nightingale, in those countries where it was first celebrated, had really some natural fondness for that flower, or perhaps for some insect which took shelter in it. In Sir W. Jones's translation of the Persian fable of "The Gardener and Nightingale," is the following distich:

"I know not what the rose says under his lips, that he brings back the helpless nightingales, with their mournful notes.

"One day the gardener, according to his established custom, went to view the roses; he saw a plaintive nightingale rubbing his head on the leaves of the roses, and tearing asunder, with his sharp bill, that volume adorned with gold."

And Gelâleddîn Rûzbehâr;

"While the nightingale sings thy praises with a loud voice, I am all ear, like the stalk of the rose-tree."

Pliny, however, in his delightful description of this bird, says nothing, I believe, about the rose.

CANTO THE SECOND.

DEATH OF ALTHEËTOR.

ARGUMENT.

Sardius, in his pavilion, alone with Altheëtor.—Description of the pavilion.—Sardius sends a detachment of his guards in search of Meles.—Egla and her parents are brought before the King, to answer for the murder of Meles.—Egla relates the manner of Meles' death, is retained at the palace, and invited to banquet with Sardius and his Princes.—Sardius determines to espouse Egla, but delays his purpose, at the entreaty of Idaspes.—Egla is commanded, on pain of the death of her father, to receive, as bridegroom, whomever the King may appoint.—Alcestes, Ripheus, Philomars, and Rosanes, seek her chamber, and die in succession.—Sickness and death of Altheëtor.—Sorrow of Zophiël.—Egla and her parents sent back to their home.

CANTO THE SECOND.

DEATH OF ALTHEËTOR.*

I.

Soon over Meles' grave the wild flower dropt
Its brimming dew ; nor far, where Tigris' spray
Leaps to the beam, in life's sweet blossom cropt,
Four others, fair as he, were snatched from day.

Bridegrooms like him, they knew his fate ; yet, bent
On their desires, resolved that fate to brave ;
So, in succession, each a victim went,
Borne from the bridal chamber to the grave.

II.

Low liest thou, Meles ! and 'tis mine to know,
By light of song, the darkly-hidden power
That closed thy bland, but wily lip ; and show,
In flowing verse, what followed thy death-hour.

* This name is formed of the two Greek words Alethes and etor

III.

Noon slept upon thy grave, and Media's king
Had sat him down, from court and harem far,
With a young boy who knew to touch the string
Of the sweet harp, and wage the ivory war*

On painted field. The fainting breezes played
Among the curling clusters of his hair ;
Thro' myrtle blooms and berries, white and red,
O'er the cool space of a pavilion, fair

As fond Ionian artist might devise :

Twelve columns, ivory white, support a dome,
Painted to emulate the dark blue skies,
When seamen watch the stars, and sigh, and think of
home.

IV.

And, in the midst, Night's goddess (to the sight
More softly beauteous for a pictured moon
That mantles her, in pale mysterious light,)
Comes stealing to the arms of her Endymion.

* Chess was known at an early period. Queen Parysatis played with Artaxerxes, her son, for the life of a person whom she wished to destroy. Sir William Jones's article on the ancient game of Chaturanga, or Indian chess, is well known.

V.

On six fair pedestals, ranged two by two,
Like Leda's sons, the smiling pillars stood ;
As, each by either's side, they rose to view,
Spotless from limpid bath,¹ in some deep dusky wood,

Draining their dripping locks. In either space
Between, three lattices, with blossoms bowered,
Alternate with three pictured scenes had place ;
And all who saw, believed some god empowered

The gifted hand that spread their tints. In one,
Far from the Grecian camp, his rage profound
Soothing, with lyre in hand, sat Thetis' son ;
Beside the ocean wave that darkly dashed around.

VI.

Upon the next young Myrrha's form appears ;
Guilt, fear, repentance, blanch her cheek of love,
While, tender, beauteous, shuddering, drowned in tears,
She flies the day, and hides in Saba's deepest grove.

VII.

A peerless third the bride of Love displays,
Psyche, with lamp in hand ; blest, while unknown
The cause that gave her bliss ; now, daring rays
The mystery pierce, and all her pleasure's flown.

VIII.

Beneath that dome, reclined the youthful king,
Upon a silver couch;* and soothed to mood
As free and soft as perfumes from the wing
Of bird that shook the jasmines as it wooed,†

Its fitful song the mingling murmur meeting
Of marble founts of many a fair device ;
And bees that banquet, from the sun retreating,
In every full, deep flower, that crowns his paradise. (1)

IX.

While gemmy diadem thrown down beside,
And garment, at the neck plucked open, proved
His unconstraint, and scorn of regal pride,
When thus apart retired, he sat with those he loved.

X.

One careless arm around the boy was flung,
Not undeserving of that free caress;
But warm and true, and of a heart and tongue
To heighten bliss or mitigate distress.

* Couches of gold and silver were not uncommon among the Median and Persian princes.

† The white and yellow jessamine is now found growing in abundance about mount Casius, intermixed with laurels, myrtles, and other delightful shrubs.

XI.

Quick to perceive, in him no freedom rude
 Reproved full confidence : friendship the meat
 His soul had starved without, with gratitude
 Was ta'en ; and her rich wine crowned high the banquet sweet.

What sire Altheëtor owned 'twere hard to trace ;
 A beautiful Ionian was his mother ;
 Some found to Sardijs semblance, in his face,
 Who never better could have loved a brother.

XII.

But now, the ivory battle at its close,
 " Go to thy harp," said Sardijs, "'twere severe
 To keep thee longer, thus ;" then, as he rose,
 " Where's our ambassador ? Call Meles here."

XIII.

Altheëtor said : " Alas ! my prince, the chase
 Detains him long ; and yet from peril sure
 'Tis deemed he fares : nay, those there are who trace
 His absence to some silvan paramour."

XIV.

" Let him be sought," said Sardijs.* No delay
 Mocked that command ; but vestige, glimpse, nor breath
 Was gleaned, till, sadly, on the seventh day,
 A band returned with tidings of his death.

* Sardijs is the name of a precious stone.

XV.

Sardius was sad upon his audience-seat.

Then spoke old Philomars : " Remember well,
O king ! without the city, had retreat
Two of those captives of a race so fell,

" Thy father and my lord would rid the earth,
Root, branch, and bud, and gave the task to me ;
But two escaped the sword, and so had birth
Another serpent. This, O prince ! to thee

" Was told ; and to complete the work I craved ;
But thou didst check my zeal, with angry mood,
And saidst, ' If any trembling wretch be saved,
Let him live on ; there's been enough of blood.'

" We've traced Lord Meles to that serpent's den,
And seen him in the vile earth murdered lie ;
Yet wherefore grieves the greatest king of men ?
This only is the fruit of clemency."

XVI.

Then Sardius spoke, (as on the earth he cast,
While grief gave anger place, his full dark eye) :
" Whoe'er has done this deed has done his last !
Soldier, priest, Jew, or Mede, by Belus he shall die."

XVII.

Then brought they Zoroh in, misfortune's pride,
His venerable locks with age were white ;
He cheered his trembling partner, at his side,
Reposing on his God, befall him as it might.

XVIII.

Young Egla marked him stand so firm and pale ;
Looked in her mother's face—'twas anguish there ;
Then gently threw aside her azure veil,
And in an upward glance sent forth to heaven a prayer.

XIX.

Then prostrate thus : " Oh, monarch, seal my doom !
Thy sorrow for Lord Meles' death I know ;
Take then thy victim, drag me to his tomb,
And to his manes let my life-blood flow ! (2)

XX.

" Oh ! by the God who made yon glowing sun,
And warmed cold dust to beauty with his breath ;
By all the good that e'er was caused or done,
Nor I, nor mine, have wrought thy subject's death.

XXI.

" Yet think not I would live ; alas ! to me
No warrior of my country e'er shall come ;
And forth with dance, and flowers, and minstrelsy,
I go to bid no brother welcome home.

XXII.

“ Sad from my birth, nay,—born upon that day
When perished all my race, my infant ears
Were opened first with groans ; and the first ray
I saw came dimly through my mother’s tears.

“ Pour forth my life, a guiltless offering
Most freely given ! But let me die alone !
Destroy not those who gave me birth ! oh, king !
I’ve blood enough : let it for all atone !”

XXIII.

She traced it on her hand, through the soft skin
Meandering seen. Without, that hand was white
As drops for infant lip ; the palm within
Faintly carnationed, as of Amphitrite,

The fond Ionians fancied the pure shell
Chosen by that loved goddess for a car,
While o’er her feet dissolving foam-wreaths fell
In kisses ; so they dreamed, in little bark afar.

XXIV.

Egla had ceased : her pure cheeks heightened glow ;
Her white hands clasped ; blue veil, half fallen down ;
Fair locks and gushing tears, stole o’er him so,
That Sardius had not harmed her for his crown.

Yet, serious, thus fair justice' course pursued :
As if to hide what look and tone revealed ;
" What lured a Median to thy solitude ?
How came his death ? and who his corse concealed ? "

XXV.

'Twas thus she told her tale : " A truant dove
Had flown ; I strayed a little from the track
That winds in mazes to my lonely grove,
But heard a hunter's voice and hastened back.

XXVI.

" Lord Meles saw ; and with a slender dart,
Fastened the little flutterer to a tree
By the white wing, with such surpassing art,
'Twas scarcely wounded when returned to me.*

XXVII.

" Thankful I took ; but taught to be afraid
Of stranger's glance, retired : my mother sighed
And trembling saw ; yet soon our dwelling's shade
The Median sought, and claimed me for a bride.

* The Medes as well as the Persians were expert with the bow and javelin.

XXVIII.

“ But when reluctant to my humble room
I had retired, was spread a fragrance there,
Like rose and lotus shaken in their bloom ;
And something came and spoke, and looked so fair,

XXIX.

“ It seemed all fresh from heaven ; but soon the thought
Of things that tempt to sorcery in the night
Made me afraid. It fled ; and Meles sought
His bridal bed ; the moon was shining bright ;

XXX.

“ I saw his bracelets gleam, and knew him well ;
But, ere he spoke, was breathed a sound so dread,
That fear enchained my senses like a spell,
And when the morning came, my lord was dead.

XXXI.

“ And then my mother, in her anxious care,
Concealed me in a cave, that long before
Saved her from massacre ; and left me there,
To live in darkness, till the search was o’er

“ Her fears foretold. So, in that cavern’s gloom
Alone upon the damp bare rock I lay,
Like a deserted corse ; but that cold tomb
Soon filled with rosy mists, like dawn of day,

“ Which, half dispersing, showed the same fair thing
I saw before ; and with it came another,
More gentle than the first, and helped it bring
Fresh flowers and fruits, in semblance like a brother.

XXXII.

“ They spread, upon the rock, a flowery couch ;
And of a sparkling goblet bade me sip,—
For that they saw me cold ; I dared not touch,
But, mid the sweet temptation, closed my lip ;

“ And from their grateful warmth and looks so fair
I turned away and shrank. Of their intent,
I do not know to tell, or what they were—
But feared and doubted both ; and when they went,

“ Fled trembling to my home ; content to meet
The sternest death injustice might prepare,
Ere trust my weakness, in that dark retreat,
To such strange peril as assailed me there.”

XXXIII.

She ceased : and now, in palace bade to stay,
Awaits the royal pleasure ; but no more,
Though strictly watched and guarded, all the day,
To that stern warrior's threats was given o'er,

Dark Philomars, strong in his country's cause ;
But harder than his battle-helm his heart ;
Born, while his father fought, and nurst in wars,
Pillage and fire his sports, to kill his only art.

XXXIV.

And, when he sacked a city, he could tear
The screaming infant from its mother's arms,
Dash it to earth ; and, while 'twas weltering there
With demon grasp, impress her shuddering charms :

Then, as she faints with shrieks and struggles vain,
Coolly recall her with the ruffian blow ;
And look, and pause, insatiate of her pain,
Then gash her tender throat, and see the life-blood flow.

XXXV.

Oh, Nature ! can it be ?—the thought alone
Chills the quick pulse : Belief retires afar ;
Reason grows angry ; Pity breathes a groan ;
And each distrusts the truth : yet, “such things are.”(3)

Are ?—Nay, in this late age ! God, canst thou view
Thine image so debased ? The bard in grief
Thinks o'er the creed of fiends ; sees what men do ;
And, wondering, scarce rejects the wild belief.

XXXVI.

Night came ; and old Idaspes, all alone
 With Sardius, had retired ; but why so late
 He wakes, with his white hairs, may not be known,
 And still the captives tremble for their fate.

But when the old man went, that gentle boy
 Altheëtor sat by his loved master's couch ;
 And fervent pleadings for their lives employ
 His lips that else had sung. The while his touch
 Thrilled o'er his lyre, gay Meles' early blight
 Past from the prince's thought ; the transient gloom
 Was to his soul just as some bird of night
 Had flitted cross the moon when full and bright,
 She o'er his garden shone in the sweet month of bloom.*

XXXVII.

Of late his harem tired ; if suns were there
 He did not burn, but sickened in their rays,
 And snow-white Egla, mild, and chaste, and fair,
 Came o'er his fancy ; as in sultry days, (4)
 Soft clouds appear, when travellers bare the brow ;
 And faint and panting, bless the timely shade,
 And breathe the cool refreshment ; so e'en now
 Refreshed his languid soul the softly-imaged maid.

* When the Persians celebrate their feast of roses.

XXXVIII.

Or, as some youth waked from the vine's excess,
Parched and impure forgets the joys it gave ;
And flies the fair Bacchante's wild caress,
For some lone Naiad's grot, and cools him in the wave.

XXXIX.

Or as some graceful fawn, o'erspent with play,
Faints in the beam, and where deep shades invite ;
Flies, all impatient of the burning day,
And woos the lily's shade to hide him from its light.

XL.

So felt the king ; nor sleeping quite nor waking,
As wildering o'er his lids the zephyrs sweep,
Whole beds of purple hyacinths forsaking ;
And when sweet reverie gave place to sleep,

He dreamed of baths, or beds of flowers and dew,
Or sculptured marbles, as at Cnidos seen ;
But still, with fair long locks and veil of blue,
Another form would blend with every view,
With visionary grace and heavenly eye and mien.

XLI.

The smile of morning woke Idaspes' care ;
And Egla, dubious if its light might bring
Or weal or woe to her, was bid prepare
To sit at evening banquet with the king.

XLII.

Then came an ancient dame, skilled in those arts,
Employed by beauty's daughters to enchain,
Or lightly touch, the soft voluptuous hearts
Of youths that seem, as they, of curl and eyebrow vain.*

XLIII.

And pouring perfumes in the bath, she told
Wild tales of a Chaldean princess, loved
By the fair sprite Eroziel, who, of old,
Taught all those trims to heighten beauty, proved

By Lydian, Median, Perse, and Greek ; with black (5)
To tip the eye-lid ; stain the finger ; deck
The cheek with hues that languor bids it lack ;
And how he taught to twine the arms and neck

With wreaths of gems, or made or found by him, (6)
Or his enamoured brothers, when they bore
Love for the like, and many a secret dim
That nature would conceal from charm'd recesses tore.

* Many of the young men of Asia, and even those of Athens, used the same arts at their toilets as the women.

XLIV.

This story o'er, the dainty maids were fain
To take the white rose of her hand, and tip
Each taper finger with a ruddy stain,
To make it like the coral of her lip.

XLV.

But Egla this refused them ; and forbore
The folded turban twined with many a string
Of gems ; and, as in tender memory, wore
Her country's simpler garb, to meet the youthful king.

XLVI.

Day o'er, the task was done ; the melting hues
Of twilight gone, and reigned the evening gloom
Gently o'er fount and tower ; she could refuse
No more ; and, led by slaves, sought the fair banquet-
room.

XLVII.

With unassured yet graceful step advancing,
The light vermilion of her cheek more warm
For doubtful modesty ; while all were glancing
Over the strange attire that well became such form.

XLVIII.

To lend her space the admiring band gave way ;
The sandals on her silvery feet were blue ;
Of saffron tint her robe, as when young day
Spreads softly o'er the heavens, and tints the trem-
bling dew.

XLIX.

Light was that robe, as mist ; and not a gem
Or ornament impedes its wavy fold,
Long and profuse ; save that, above its hem,
'Twas 'broidered with pomegranate-wreath, in gold.

L.

And, by a silken cincture, broad and blue,
In shapely guise about the waist confined,
Blent with the curls that, of a lighter hue,
Half floated, waving in their length behind ;
The other half, in braided tresses twined,
Was decked with rose of pearls, and sapphires azure too,

Arranged with curious skill to imitate
The sweet acacia's blossoms ; just as live
And droop those tender flowers in natural state ;
And so the trembling gems seemed sensitive ;

And pendant, sometimes, touch her neck ; and there
Seem shrinking from its softness as alive.
And round her arms flower-white, and round, and fair,
Slight bandelets were twined of colours five ; (7)

Like little rainbows seemly on those arms ;
None of that court had seen the like before ;
Soft, fragrant, bright,—so much like heaven her charms,
It scarce could seem idolatry t' adore.

LI.

He who beheld her hand forgot her face ;
Yet in that face was all beside forgot ;
And he, who as she went, beheld her pace,
And locks profuse, had said, "nay, turn thee not."

LII.

Placed on a banquet-couch beside the king,
'Mid many a sparkling guest no eye forbore ;
But, like their darts, the warrior-princes fling
Such looks as seemed to pierce, and scan her o'er and
o'er :

Nor met alone the glare of lip and eye—
Charms, but not rare :—the gazer stern and cool,
Who sought but faults, nor fault or spot could spy ;
In every limb, joint, vein, the maid was beautiful.

LIII.

Save that her lip, like some bud-bursting flower,
Just scorned the bounds of symmetry, perchance,
But by its rashness gained an added power ;
Heightening perfection to luxuriance.*

* This description is from the life ; and does not exceed in any particular the *face* of a Canadian lady of Swiss descent. She was called by the peasants of her neighbourhood "L'ange des bois."

LIV.

But that was only when she smiled, and when
Dissolved th' intense expression of her eye;
And had her Spirit-love first seen her then
He had not doubted her mortality.

LV.

And could she smile, for that a stranger hung
O'er her fair form, and spoke to her of love?—
Where is the youth who scorned a court, and sprung
Amid Euphrates' waves, as told her in her grove?

Haply she did, and for awhile forgot
Those dark acacias, where so oft was wept
Her lone, uncertain, visionary lot;
Yet where an angel watched her as she slept.

LVI.

When light, love, music, beauty, all dispense
Their wild commingling charms, who shall controul
The gushing torrent of attracted sense,
And keep the forms of memory and of soul?

LVII.

Oh! theme of rapture, honoured Constancy!
Invoked, hoped, sworn, but rare! — have we per-
chance
To thank the generous breast that nurtures thee
For thy dear life, when saved? or fate, or circum-
stance?

LVIII.

“ Thy fragrant form, as the tall lily white,
Looks full and soft ; yet supple as the reed
Kissing its image in the fountain light,
Or ostrich’ wavy plume.” So speaks the Mede ;

While bending o’er her banquet-couch, he breathes
Her breath, whose fragrance woos that near advance ;
Plays with her silken tresses’ wandering wreaths,
And looks, and looks again with renovated glance.

LIX.

But, ever watchful, to his prince’s side
Came old Idaspes ; he, alone, might dare
To check the rising transport, ere its tide
Arose too high to quell ;—and thus, expressed his care,

Whispering in murmurs first : “ At last, O king !
Thy subjects breathe ; the cries of slaughter cease ;
And happy labourers bless thee, as they bring
Forth from thy smiling fields, the fruits of peace.

“ Their wounds just healing over, wouldst thou rush
Upon thy doom and theirs ? What bitter tears
Must flow, if thou shouldst fall ! what blood must gush !
Wait, till the cause of Meles’ fate appears.

“ And ere this dangerous beauty be thy bride,
Let him who loves thee best come forth and prove
The peril first.” Alcestes rose beside,
And said, “ Oh prince ! to prove my faith and love,

“ I’ll dare as many deaths as on the sod
Without, the falling rose of leaves has strown !
And if bland Meles fell by rival god,
So let me fall ; and live the pride of Media’s throne ! ”

. LX.

Egla, o’erwhelmed with shame, distaste, and fear,
Could, of remonstrance, utter not a breath ;
Ere fixed Idaspes’ whisper met her ear :
“ *One word impassive seals thy father’s death.*”

LXI.

And while Alcestes’ bolder glances stray
O’er the fair trembler to his monarch dear ;
Not one distrustful whispering came t’ allay
The sudden joy with slightest shade of fear :

A dark-hair’d priestess, well he knew, of late
Had Meles loved ; and for the mystery
That hung so darkly o’er his early fate,
Looked for no deadlier cause than wounded jealousy.

LXII.

And for the story of the cave, he deemed
That lone, and in the dark, the frightened maid
Had gained a respite from her tears, and dreamed ;
Or haply framed the tale, but to evade

Some fear'd result. But, be it as it might,
The thoughtless King accedes ; and, ere the day
Again had dawned, dead, ghastly to the sight,
Before his bridal door the tall Alcestes lay.

LXIII.

So died the youth. But little might avail
His sacrifice ; for Sardi^{us}, who forbore
His purpose but awhile, condemn'd the tale,
And madly spoke thus, ere the day was o'er :

LXIV.

“ Ask of Alcestes' manes, did he die *
By angry god or mortal's traitorous hand ?
Whoe'er will draw to light this mystery,
Shall live the captain of my choicest band.”

* It is said by Pliny, that Appion raised up the soul of Homer, in order to learn from him his country and his parents ; and Apollonius Tyanæus is said to have raised the manes of Achilles.

LXV.

That promise claimed Ripheus ; he desired
No dearer boon ; yet haply panted, less
By maddening thought of love and beauty fired,
Than to a rival court to prove his fearlessness.

LXVI.

He had grasp'd the wily Parthian in the fight ;
Leapt on the wounded tiger in the chace :
And oft his mother, vain in her delight, (8)
Boasted she owed him to a god's embrace.

LXVII.

So he relied on that ; and fickle chance
Conspired with the deceit, until his doom
Was rush'd upon. But still his bold advance
Some caution guarded ; to the fatal room

He came ; and first explored with trusty blade ;
But soon as he approached the fatal bride,
Opened the terrace door, and, half in shade,
A form, as of a mortal, seem'd to glide ;

LXVIII.

He flew to strike, but baffling still the blow,
And still, receding from the chamber far,
It lured him on ; and in the morning low
And bloody lay the form, which not a scar

Before had e'er defaced. Dismay profound
Gave place to doubt ; for, as by mortal hand
And mortal weapon made, the wound was found,
And heard had been the clash that snapp'd his dinted
brand.

LXIX.

Then came, with rage renewed, rough Philomars,
(For gentle bridegroom's office most unmeet
Of all), and craved, in guerdon of his scars,
Permission to drag forth the deep deceit,

He charged upon the daughter of the Jew,
Whose life provoked his thirst ; and pledged him, rife
With ancient hate, to bring her fraud to view,
Or pay the bold aspersion with his life.

LXX.

Led from the bridal room a deep arcade,
And paths of flowers and fountains, often graced
With bathing beauty, now reflect the shade
Of warriors tall, and grim with helm and corselet braced.

LXXI.

They guard each pass, so that a bird in vain
An outlet to his airy rounds might seek ;
And Philomars stalk'd o'er the floor, with pain
Stifling the rage which, yet, he dared not wreak.

And muttering 'twixt clench'd teeth, "At last, young witch,
Ends thy career;" then he, with careful touch
Of his proved sword, examined every nitch;
Then, to the bride approach'd, and would have pierced
her couch.

LXXII.

Not Eva, lovelier than the tints of air, (9)
Crouching amid the leaves lest heaven should see
That form, all panting 'neath her yellow hair, (10)
E'er looked more fair, or trembled more than she.

LXXIII.

But the pale blaze of every fragrant lamp
That moment died, as if a sudden gust
Of thick cold air, had gush'd from cavern damp;
And groping, in the darkness, vainly curst

And struggled Philomars. 'Twas his last breath
That Egla heard; the suffocating noise
Of the one lengthen'd pang that gave him death:
She swooned upon her couch, but might not know the
cause.

LXXIV.

The young Rosanes came at early morn,
To view the corse, that lay in piteous case,
Grasping the sword its hand, at eve, had drawn;
The last fierce frown still stiff upon its face.

LXXV.

And thus the youth (in dress of horseman dight):

“ Art dead old wolf? If ever, since his reign,
Pluto was grateful, take his thanks to night;
For who has sent down more to people his domain?

LXXVI.

“ But prithee, soldier, when the nether coasts

Receive thy soul, less grim and angry be;
Lest the fair sun be clouded o’er with ghosts
That rush again to earth to ’scape the sight of thee!”

LXXVII.

Rosanes, of the painted eyebrow, vain,

To gain report for wit and valour strove;
Rearing his Parthian courser on the plain,
And boasting, at the feast, of Naiad’s love.

LXXVIII.

And round his neck an amulet he wore

Of many a gem in mystic mazes tied; (11)
And mad for much applause, not long forbore
To name his wishes for the dangerous bride.

LXXIX.

Enough to tell, he shared the common fate

Of those whose rash adventurous zeal could dare
The spirit-guarded couch. But oh! thy state,
Altheëtor, generous boy! best claims the minstrel’s care.

LXXX.

When Media's last king died, a tumult rose,
And all Idaspes' prudence scarce procured
To keep the youthful Sardiſ from his foes ;
And, ere his father's throne was yet ſecured,

Upon a terrace while Altheëtor hung
About the prince, who careleſſly careſt,
A well-aimed arrow glanced ; the ſtrippling ſprung,
Stood like a ſhield, and let it pierce his breaſt.

LXXXI.

But ſage Pithoës knew the healing good
Of every herb ; he pluck'd the dart away ;
And ſtopp'd the rich effuſion of his blood
As at his monarch's feet the boy exulting lay ;

LXXXII.

Drew forth from ſcrip, an antidotal balm ;
And ere the venom through life's ſtreams could creep ;
Beſtowed for death's convulſions dewy calm,
And ſteep'd each throbbing vein in ſalutary ſleep.

LXXXIII.

But now Altheëtor's ſick. The kindly draught,
The bath of bruised herbs were vainly tried ;
While his young breath ſeem'd as it fain would waft
His ſoul away ;—ſo piteouſly he ſighed.

LXXXIV.

Above his couch were hung his sword and lyre,
His polish'd bow, and javelin often proved
In the far chace, where once in faith and fire
He fared beside to guard and watch the prince he loved.

LXXXV.

His fragrant locks, thrown backward from his brow,
Displayed its throbbing pulse : ah ! how rebell'd
That heart, the seat of truth ! Beside him now
One languid hand the good Pithoës held ;

LXXXVI.

And look'd, and thought, and bent his brow in vain ;
Then, in the sadness of his baffled skill,
Resign'd the boy to fate ; then thought again,—
Was there no hidden cause for such consuming ill ?

LXXXVII.

Still o'er the couch he casts his gentle eyes,
And brought fresh balm ; but all was unavailing.
Altheëtor faintly breathes his thanks, and sighs,
As if his guiltless life that moment were exhaling.

LXXXVIII.

'Twas long he had not spoke ; now heaved his breast,
And now, despite of shame, a tear was straying
From the closed, quivering lid. Some grief suppress,
Some secret care upon his life was preying.

LXXXIX.

So came a glimpse across Pithoës' thought ;
And, in obedience to the doubt, he said,
“ 'Tis strange, Altheëtor, thou hast never aught
Ask'd, or express'd, of the fair captive maid,

“ For it was thou who forced the crowd to yield,
When she was rudely dragg'd, on audience day,
And gently loosed, from Philomars's shield,
A lock of her fair hair he else had torn away.

XC.

“ Sardijs believed and loved her, would have wed,
But old Idaspes, doubtful 'twas some god
That, amorous of her charms, laid Meles dead,
Awhile restrain'd the King, who saw, unawed,

“ The gay Alcestes, from her chamber fair
Thrown dead and black. Ripheus, too, lies low ;
Old Philomars spoke his last curses there ;
And young Rosanes ne'er his silver bow

“ Shall draw again ; and yet the King is fix'd
In his resolve to wed ; some power divine,
Envyng our peace, impels ; or she has mix'd,
By magic skill, some philtre with his wine. (12)

XCI.

“ Or there’s in her blue eye some wicked light, (13)
That steadily allures him to his doom :
She’s bidden to the feast again to-night,
And good Idaspes’ countenance in gloom

“ Is fall’n :—in vain he strives ;—his silver hairs
Rise with the anguish at his heart’s true core ;
While the impatient, reckless Sardiſs ſwears
By Baal, whate’er betides, to wait but three days more.

XCII.

“ Nor ſoldier, prince, or ſatrap, more appear
Vaunting their fealty firm with flattering breath,
But each ſpeak low, as if ſome god were near,
In ſilent anger ſingling him for death.”

XCIII.

Now o’er Altheëtor’s face what changes glisten’d
As ear and open lip drank every word ;
He raiſed him from his couch, he look’d, he liſten’d,
Reviving—renovating—as he heard.

XCIV.

O’er cheek and brow a lively red was ruſhing,
While half he felt his dark eye could not tell ;
Then (ſpent the pang of hope) cold dewſ were guſhing
From brow again turned pale. He droop’d—he fell

Faint on his pillow. Unsurprised and calm
Soon to restore the good Pithoës knew ;
He saw what fever raged, and knew its balm ;
Spoke comfort to his charge ; and for awhile withdrew.

XCV.

What in his breast revolved, I cannot tell ;
To seek Idaspes' aid his steps were bent ;
And when 'twas midnight, as by sudden spell
Restored, to bridal room Altheëtor went.

XCVI.

Touching his golden harp to prelude sweet
Entered the youth, so pensive, pale, and fair ;
Advanced respectful to the virgin's feet,
And, lowly bending down, made tuneful parlance there.

XCVII.

Like perfume soft his gentle accents rose,
And sweetly thrill'd the gilded roof along ;
His warm devoted soul no terror knows,
And truth and love lend fervour to his song.

XCVIII.

She hides her face upon her couch, that there
She may not see him die. No groan, she springs
Frantic between a hope-beam and despair,
And twines her long hair round him as he sings. (14)

XCIX.

Then thus :—" Oh ! Being ! who unseen but near
 Art hovering now, behold and pity me !
 For love, hope, beauty, music,—all that's dear,
 Look,—look on me,—and spare my agony !

C.

" Spirit ! in mercy, make me not the cause,
 The hateful cause, of this kind being's death !
 In pity kill me first !—He lives—he draws—
 Thou wilt not blast ?—he draws his harmless breath."

CI.

Still lives Altheëtor ;—still unguarded strays
 One hand o'er his fall'n lyre ; but all his soul
 Is lost,—given up ;—he fain would turn to gaze,
 But cannot turn, so twined. Now, all that stole

Through every vein, and thrilled each separate nerve,
 Himself could not have told,—all wound and clapsed
 In her white arms and hair. Ah ! can they serve
 To save him ?—" What a sea of sweets !"—he gasped,

But 'twas delight :—sound, fragrance, all were breathing.
 Still swell'd the transport, " Let me look and thank :"
 He sighed (celestial smiles his lip enwreathing),
 " I die—but ask no more," he said and sank ;

Still by her arms supported—lower—lower—
As by soft sleep oppress'd ;—so calm, so fair—
He rested on the purple tap'stried floor,
It seemed an angel lay reposing there.

CII.

Egla bent o'er him, all amazed ;—awhile
Thank'd God, the Spirit, and her stars (so much
Like life his gently closing lids and smile);—
Then felt upon his heart. Ah! to that touch

Responds no quivering pulse :—'tis past. Then burst
Her grief thus from her inmost heart, that bleeds :—
“Nay, finish! fiend, unpitying and accurst!
Finish, and rid me too, of life, and of thy deeds!”

CIII.

She hid her face in both her hands; and when,
At length, look'd out, a form was bending o'er
The good, the beauteous boy. With piteous ken
It sought her eye, but still to speak forbore.

CIV.

A deep unutterable anguish kept
The silence long ;—then from his inmost breast
The Spirit spoke, “Oh! were I him so wept,
Daughter of earth, I tell thee I were blest:

CV.

“ Couldst thou conceive but half the pain I bear,
Or agent of what good I fain would be,
I had not added to my deep despair
And heavy curse, another curse—from thee.

CVI.

“ I’ve loved the youth ; since first to this vile court
I followed thee, from the deserted cave ;—
I saw him—in thy arms—and did not hurt ;
What could I more ?—alas ! I could not save !

CVII.

“ He died of love ; or the o’erperfect joy (15)
Of being pitied,—prayed for,—prest by thee.
Oh ! for the fate of that devoted boy
I’d sell my birth-right to eternity.

CVIII.

“ I am not the cause of this thy last distress.
Nay ! look upon thy Spirit ere he flies !
Look on me, once, and learn to hate me less !”
He said : and tears fell fast from his immortal eyes.

CIX.

Her looks were on the corse ; no more he said ;
Deeper the darkness grew : ’twas near the dawn ;
And chilled and sorrowing through the air he sped,
And in Hircania’s deepest shades, ere morn,

Was hidden 'mid the leaves. Low moan'd the blast,
And chilly mists obscured the rising sun ;
So bitter were his tears, that, where he past,
Was blighted every flower they fell upon.

CX.

Wild was the place, but wilder his despair :
Low shaggy rocks that o'er deep caverns scowl
Echo his groans : the tigress, in her lair,
Starts at the sound, and answers with a growl.

CXI.

The day wore on ; the tide of transport through
He listened to the forest's murmuring sound ;
Until his grief alleviation drew,
From the according horrors that surround.

CXII.

And thus, at length his plaintive lip expressed
The mitigated pang ; 'tis sometimes so
When grief meets genius in the mortal breast,
And words, most deeply sweet, betray subsided woe.

CXIII.

“ Thou'rt gone, Altheëtor ; of thy gentle breath
Guiltless am I, but bear the penalty !
Oh ! is there one to whom thine early death
Can cause the sorrow it has caused to me ?

CXIV.

“ Cold, cold, and hush’d, is that fond, faithful breast ;
Oh ! of the breath of God too much was there !
It swelled, aspired, it could not be compressed—
But gained a bliss frail nature could not bear. (16)

CXV.

“ Oh ! good and true beyond thy mortal birth !
What high-soul’d angel helped in forming thee ?
Haply thou wert what I had been, if earth
Had been the element composing me.

CXVI.

“ Banish’d from heaven so long, what there transpires,
This weary exiled ear may rarely meet.
But it is whispered that the unquelled desires
Another spirit for each forfeit seat, (17)

“ Left vacant by our fall. That spirit placed
In mortal form, must every trial bear,
Midst all that can pollute ; and, if defaced
But by one stain, it may not enter there.

CXVII.

“ Though all the earth is wing’d, from bound to bound ;
Though heaven desires, and angels watch, and pray
To see their ranks with fair completion crowned ;
So few to bless their utmost search are found,
That half in heaven have ceased to hope the day ;
And pensive seraphs’ sighs o’er heavenly harps resound.

CXVIII.

“ And when, long wandering from his blissful height,
One like to thee some quick-eyed spirit views,
He springs to heaven, more radiant from delight,
And heaven’s blue domes ring loud with rapture at the
news.

CXIX.

“ Yet oft the being, by all heaven beloved,
(So doubtful every good, in world like this ;)
Some fiend corrupts ere ripe to be removed :
And tears are seen in eyes made but to float in bliss.

CXX.

“ Thou’lt take perchance, Altheëtor, (who so pure,
That may if thou mayst not ?) mid the bright throng,
My high, my forfeit place ; love would secure
Its prize ; so kill’d thee, ere below too long.

CXXI.

“ Decay shall ne’er thy perfect form defile,
Nor hungry flame consume. In dews I’ll steep
Thy limbs ; and thou shalt look upon the pile
As gentle as a maiden, fallen asleep

“ ’Mid musings of ideal bliss ; and making
Of her wild hopes, lit up by fancy’s beam,
A fairer lover than may woo her waking ;
Blest to her wish alone in soft ecstatic dream.

CXXII.

“ And I will steal thee, when the perfumes rise*
 Around the cassia wood in smoky wave ;
 I'll shroud thee in a mist from mortal eyes,
 And gently lay thee in some sparry cave

“ Of Paros ; there, seek out some kindly Gnome
 And see him ('mid his lamps of airy light),
 By wondrous process, done in earth's dark womb,
 Change thee, smile, lip, hair, all, to marble pure and
 white.

CXXIII.

“ Oh ! my loved Hyacinth ! when as a god
 I hurled the disk ; and from thy hapless head
 The pure sweet blood made flowers upon the sod ; (18)
 'Twas thus I wept thee ! beautiful but dead,

“ Like all I've loved. Oriel, false fiend, thy breath†
 Guided my weapon : come ! most happy thou
 If my pain please : I mourn another death :
 Come, with thy insect wings, I'll hear thy mockery now.

* The Assyrians, Persians, and Medians, are said not to have burned their dead ; but the mother of Altheëtor was an Ionian ; the only reason that can be assigned for Zóphiël's supposing he would be burnt after the Grecian manner.

† See fable of Zephyr and Hyacinth. Oriel is supposed to shew himself to mortals as Zephyrus, while Phraërión in reality nurses and protects the flowers.

CXXIV.

“Thou didst not change his blood to purple flowers :
Thy poisonous breath can blight but not create !
Thou canst but hover o’er Phraëriion’s bowers,
And claim of men the honours of his state.

CXXV.

“Thou kill’st my Hyacinth ; but yet a beam
Of comfort still was mine : I saw preserved
His beauty all entire ; and gave a gleam
Of him to a young burning Greek ;—so served

“Thy crime a worthy cause ; for long inspired,
With a consuming wish, that Grecian’s heart,
Lost to repose, so caught what it desired ;
And soon the chiselled stone glowed with a wondrous
art.”*

CXXVI.

While thus, the now half-solaced Zóphiël brings
Food to his soul, past o’er his gloomier mood :
He shakes his ringlets, spreads his pinions, springs
From that rude seat, and leaves the mazy wood.

* Zóphiël, as may be perceived, since his first introduction, is supposed to be that fallen angel who was adored by mortals as the god Apollo. This manner of imparting to a young artist excellence in sculpture, is not, therefore, out of character.

CXXVII.

That morn o'er Ecbatane rose pale and slow ;
Thick lingering night-damps clog the morning's breath,
And veil'd the sun that rose with floodly glow,
As if great nature's heart bled for the recent death.

CXXVIII.

White-haired Idaspes from the fatal room
Bade his own slaves love's loveliest victim bring,
Fresh, fair, but cold ;—and in that lurid gloom
Set forth the funeral couch, and show'd him to the
king.

CXXIX.

And drew away the tunic from the scar
Seen on his cold white breast ;—" And is it thou ?"—
He said, " when treachery wings her darts afar,
What faithful heart will be presented now !

CXXX.

" Alas ! alas ! that ever these old eyes
Should see Altheëtor thus ! where is there one,
When lowly in the earth Idaspes lies,
Will love and guard his prince as thou hast done ?"

CXXXI.

Sardius believed he slept : but undeceived,
Soon as he found that faithful heart was cold,
He turned away his radiant brow and grieved,
And, at that moment, freely would have sold

CXXXII.

The diadem, that from his locks he tore,
For that one life. Idaspes watched his mood,
And (ere the first fierce burst of grief was o'er—
While lost Altheëtor's every pulse) pursued

With guardian skill, the kindly deep design,
He probed the king's light changeful heart; and gained
A promise that the maid of Palestine,
Until twelve moons had o'er his garden waned,

Should live in banishment from court. So sent
To muse, in peace, upon her unknown love
(So long announced) dejected Egla went
With all her house; and seeks her own acacia
grove. (19)

Cuba. Pueblo Nuevo. June 1827.

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NOTES
TO
CANTO THE SECOND.

(1) "*In every full deep flower that crowned his paradise.*"

THE Medes and Persians were accustomed to retire to delicious gardens, which were called paradises.

Josephus, speaking of a powerful Babylonian king, says: "He erected elevated places, for walking, of stone, and made them resemble mountains; and built them so that they might be planted with all sorts of trees. He also erected what was called a *pensile paradise*, because his wife was desirous to have things like her own country, she having been bred up in the palaces of Media."

The same custom is still continued in the east, where people of distinction pass their most pleasant hours in the pavilions or kiosks of their gardens.

(2) "*And to his manes let my life-blood flow.*"

Elga might have heard of the gods manes from some wandering Ionian. The Greeks attributed four distinct parts to man;—the body which is resolved to dust; the soul which, as they imagined, passed to Tartarus or the Elysian fields, according to its merits; the image which inhabited the Infernal vestibule; and the shade which wandered about the sepulchre: this last they were accustomed to invoke three times, and libations were poured out to

this as well as to the gods manes, who were the genii of the dead, and had the care of their sepulchres and wandering shades.—See *Travels of Antenor*.

The Jews, besides, at the time this scene is supposed to have transpired, began to be imbued with the Chaldaic superstitions or belief. “The *modern Jews*,” says Father Augustin Calmet, “hold the souls of men to be spiritual and immortal, but that they sometimes appear again, as well as good and evil dæmons; that the souls of the Hebrews are never visible either in hell or paradise, except their bodies are buried; that even after they are buried, the soul makes frequent excursions from its destined residence to visit its former body and enquire into its condition; that it wanders about for a full year after its first separation from the body; and that it was before the expiration of this year that the Witch of Endor called up the soul of Samuel.”

Origen and Theophylact say also that the Jews and Heathens believed the soul to continue near the body for some time after the death of the person.—*Calmet*.

Origen, in his second book against Celsus, (continues the reverend Father Dom Augustin Calmet) relates and subscribes to the opinion of Plato, who says “that the shadows and images of the dead, which are seen near sepulchres, are nothing but the soul disengaged from its gross body, but not yet entirely freed from matter.” From the same old book, which is probably read by few, I cannot forbear transcribing the following curious account, which, however impossible, appears to have been, at one time, generally believed:—

“If there is any truth in what we are told by the learned Digby, Chancellor to Henrietta Queen of England, by Father Kircher, a celebrated Jesuit, by Father Schott of the same order, and by Gafferell and Vallemont, concerning the wonderful mystery of the Palingenesis, or resurrection of plants, it will help to account for the shades and phantoms which many will confidently assert they have seen in church-yards.”

The account which these curious naturalists give of their performing the wonderful operation of the Palingenesis, is as follows:—

“ They take a flower and burn it to ashes, from which, being collected with great care, they extract all the salts by calcination. These salts they put into a glass vial, and having added to them a certain composition which has a property of putting the ashes in motion upon the application of heat, the whole becomes a fine dust of a bluish colour. From this dust, when agitated by a gentle heat, there arises gradually a stalk, leaves, and then a flower; in short, there is seen the apparition of a plant rising out of the ashes. When the heat ceases, the whole show disappears, and the dust falls into its former chaos at the bottom of the vessel. The return of heat always raises, out of its ashes, this vegetable phoenix, which derives its life from the presence of this genial warmth, and dies as soon as it is withdrawn.”

Then follows the manner in which Father Kircher endeavours to account for the wonderful phenomenon, and the author continues with an assertion that the members of the Royal Society at London had (as he was informed) made the same experiment upon a sparrow, and were then hoping to make it succeed upon men.

(3) ——— “ *yet, such things are.*”

In the whole catalogue of all the crimes and cruelties ever recorded since the invention of letters, there is nothing so horrid to the imagination as the simple fact of the existence of desire in the immediate presence of death and carnage. Peter the Great, Czar of Muscovy, killed several of his soldiers with his own hand, at the taking of Narva, to prevent the same atrocity related of Philomars in the text.

“ *Jornandés raconte*” (says Monsieur de Chateaubriand) “ *que des sorcières chassées loin des habitations, des hommes dans les deserts de la Scythie, furent visitées par des démons et de cet commerce sortir la nation des Huns.*” Deeds are still done which might well serve to prove a similar origin.

- (4) “ *And snow-white Egla, mild, and chaste, and fair,
Came o’er his fancy.*”

The love of Sardiſ for Egla reſembles that of Cyrus for Aspasia or Milto, of whom the Chevalier de Lentier gives the following account :—“ Aspasia being brought to Sardis by one of the ſatraps of Cyrus, was compelled to come into the preſence of that prince with many other women. While the reſt, by every art, endeavoured to attract his attention, Milto ſtood at a diſtance, with her eyes fixed upon the earth; and Cyrus was ſo charmed with the ſingularity of her modeſty (or, more probably, of her beauty) that he diſmiſſed all beſide, and remained a long time attached to this favourite.”

- (5) “ *with black
To tip the eyelid,—ſtain the finger,—deck
The cheek with hues that languor bids it lack.*”

The arts practiſed by women to heighten their beauty, were ſuppoſed to have been taught them by fallen angels.

“ Dans le livre de la parure des femmes, chap. 2. Tertulien explique, plus au long, pourquoi le démon et ſes mauvais anges apprirent, autre fois, aux femmes l’art de ſe farder et les moyens d’embellir leurs corps. Ils volurent, ſans doute, dit il, les recompenſer des faveurs qu’elles leurs avoient accordées : Tertulien ſuppoſe donc qu’il y avoit eu un mauvais commerce entre les mauvais anges et les femmes.

“ Ce paradox n’eſt pas particulier à Tertulien que pluſieurs autres pères de l’Egliſe devant et après lui ne l’aient pas avancé.

“ Mais cette erreur a été ſolidement réfutée par St Chriſoſtome, St Auguſtin, St Epiphane, &c.

“ A l’occaſion de cet étrange commerce, notre auteur fait une réflexion qui paſſe les bornes de la raillerie. Les demons, dit il ſont venu trouver les filles des hommes : tout demons qu’il ſont, ils en ont été favorablement reçus ; il ne manquoit que cette ignominie aux femmes, ut hæc ignominia fœminæ accedat. Nam

cùm et materias quasdam bene occultas et artes plurasque non bene revelatas, seculo, multó magis imperito prodidissent (siquidem et metallorum opera nudaverant et herbarum ingenia traduxerant et incantationum vires promulgaverant et omnem curiositatem usque ad stellarum interpretationem designaverant) propriè et quasi peculiariter fœminis instrumentum istud muliebris gloriæ contulerunt : lumina lapillorum, quibus brachia arctantur ; et medicamenta ex fuco, quibus lanæ colorantur et illum ipsum nigrem pulverem, quo oculorum exordia producantur.”

The above extract is from a French translation, or rather compendium, of Tertullian, which was sent me by Monsieur Van Praët, from the Bibliotheque du Roi at Paris. But as many of the most curious passages were entirely omitted, the same gentleman was so obliging as to look for the Latin folio, containing that very amusing article of Tertullian, entitled *De Habitu Muliebri* ; from which I had intended to have given, in this note, a longer extract, written out for me by Baron Joseph de Palm ; from whose very beautiful German verses two inadequate translations will appear in this volume. The extract, however, was accidentally left at Paris ; and Zophiël being reviewed and arranged for the last time at Keswick (England) I fear it may not reach me soon enough to be inserted.

(6) “ *With wreaths of gems, or made or found by him,
Or his enamoured brothers, when they bore
Love for the like.*”

This passage, like the preceding one, is simply in pursuance of the belief of Tertullian, that the custom of arraying themselves with gold and gems was first taught to beautiful women by their angel lovers, who understood chemistry, and imparted to them, among other ornamental arts, that of preparing colours for dying their garments and heightening the beauty of their complexions. But the sage Comte de Gabalis says that *gnomes* are the guardians of minerals and precious stones. I know not what origin he

ascribes to his "peuples des élémens," but he expressly affirms that no sylphe or sylphide, gnome or gnomide, can be immortal, unless united with a son or daughter of earth. Those who have any curiosity to know more, must, I suppose, consult those learned authors whom he names in the following passage :—

"En croyez vous, dit il, plus à votre nourrice qu'à la raison naturelle qu'à Platon, Pythagore, Celse, Psellus, Procle, Porphyre, Plotin, Trismegiste, Noliis, Dornée, Fludd ; qu'au grand Philippe Aureole Theophraste Bombast Paracelse de Hohenheim, et qu'à tous nos compagnous ?"

After describing the people of earth, air, fire, and water, the sage continues—"Il y avoit beaucoup de proportion entre Adam et ces creatures si parfaites ; parce qu'étant composé de se qu'il y avoit de plus pur dans les quatre élémens il renfermoit les perfections de ces quatre especes de peuples, et étoit leur roi naturel. Mais dès-lors que son peché l'eût précipité dans les particles les plus viles des élémens, comme vous verrez quelque fois, l'harmonie fut déconcertée, et il (Adam) n'eût plus de proportion, étant impur et grosier avec ces substance si purs et si subtiles."

(7) "*Slight bandelets were twined of colours five.*"

There is a German work by Hartmann, on the toilette of Hebrew women, which those who are curious on the subject may do well to consult.

The father Calmet has also written a dissertation on the dress of the ancient Hebrews, which the French translator of Tertullian says, "Ne prouve pas clairement sa proposition." M. de Chateaubriand introduces his Cymodocée (when arrayed for a religious ceremony, after her conversion to Christianity) in the same costume chosen by Egla for the banquet of Sardius.

(8) "*And oft his mother, vain in her delight,
Boasted she owed him to a God's embrace.*"

The Christian fathers did not in the least doubt that many of the

heroes of antiquity were really so produced. They, however, supposed that their fathers were some of the banished angels, who assumed, at pleasure, the forms of those gods, under whose names they caused themselves to be adored.

(9) "*Not Eva, lovelier than the tints of air.*"

The beauty which the antediluvian women must have possessed, in order to be such a temptation to angels as the Christian fathers supposed them to have been, agrees with the account of "Rabadan the Morisco," whose poem is said, by Dr Southey, to contain "the fullest Mahommedan Genesis."

The Creator, having formed the earth and adjusted his plan of procedure, summoned his angels, and requested that one of them might descend and bring him soil or clay wherewith to make a man; but the angels unanimously expressed a reluctance to what they could but consider a loathsome and debasing office. Azaraël, however, an *angel of extraordinary stature*, flew down, and collected the material required from the north, east, south, and west, of the new-made earth. "Azaraël," said the Creator, "thou shalt, in reward of thine obedience, be him who separateth the souls from the bodies of the creatures I am about to make: henceforth be called Azaraël Malec el Mout, or Azaraël, the angel of death."

The Creator then caused the earth which Azaraël had brought to be washed and purified in the fountains of heaven, till it became so resplendently clear, that it cast a more shining and beautiful light than the sun in its utmost glory. Gabriel was then commanded to carry this lovely though as yet inanimate statue of clay throughout the heavens, the earth, *the centres*, and the seas.

When the angels saw so beautiful an image, they said, "Lord, if it be pleasing in thy sight, we will, in thy most high and mighty name, prostrate ourselves before it." This proposal meeting the approbation of the Creator, the angels all bowed, inclining their celestial countenances at the feet of the inanimate Adam.

Eblis or Lucifer was the only one who refused, proudly valuing himself upon his heavenly composition; whereupon the Creator said to him, with extreme sternness, "Prostrate thyself to Adam." He made a show of doing so, but remained upon his knees, and then rose up before he had performed what God had commanded him.

The other angels, seeing him so refractory, prostrated themselves a second time, in order to complete what he had left undone. For this reason the Mahommedans, in all their prayers, at each inclination of the body, made two prostrations, one immediately after the other.—*See Rabadan.*

(10) "*That form, all panting 'neath her yellow hair.*"

Milton has described the hair of the first woman as of a yellow or golden tint. This colour appears to have been admired from the most remote antiquity. Indeed, when fine eyes and symmetry of outline are united with a white transparent skin and hair of this colour in profusion, the form so constructed and adorned seems more than mortal. Persons of this complexion are generally of tender, voluptuous dispositions, and not naturally addicted to the passions of hatred and revenge. Such however are extremely rare; and unless by the race of artists, seem, at present, less appreciated than beauties of a darker shade. Black hair and eyes embellish, very much, a common face and person; and could one look entirely over the world, the aggregate of comeliness would, perhaps, be found greater among the dark than among the fair-haired nations.

The Athenian ladies, so late as the time of Alcibiades, wore a yellow powder in their hair to give it the appearance of gold.

Josephus writes that king Solomon caused many of the finest horses, of those presented him by neighbouring princes, to be ridden by young men, chosen at the most beautiful period of their lives, and remarkable for stature and symmetry of person. These, dressed in the rich colours of Tyre, wore their hair long, and sprinkled with dust. This king, so renowned for his wisdom, de-

serves to be still more so for his taste. The murder of his brother,* however, though so little mentioned, is a very dark blot on his character. Pleasure is too generally selfish and cruel.

(11) "*And round his neck in amulet he wore,
Of many a gem in mystic mazes tied.*"

Men of all countries and ages have put faith in these talismans; the Egyptians have left a great number: they wore them on the neck, in the form of little cylinders, ornamented with figures and hieroglyphics.

"Les Grecs faisoient aussi un grand usage des amulettes; ils attribuerent des propriétés surnaturelles au laurier, au saule, aux arbrisseux épineux, au jaspe, à presque tous les pierres précieuses."—*Voyages d'Antenor*.

"The Arabs" (says Shaw) "hang about their children's necks the figure of an open hand, which the Turks and Moors paint upon their ships and houses, as an antidote and counter-charm to an evil eye. Those who are grown up still carry about with them some paragraph or other of their Koran, which, as the Jews did their phylacteries, they place upon their breast, or sew under their caps, to prevent fascination and witchcraft, and to secure themselves from sickness and misfortune. The virtue of these charms and scrolls is supposed, likewise, to be so far universal, that they suspend them upon the necks of their cattle, horses, and other beasts of burden."

The most wonderful properties were ascribed to precious stones, some detected the presence of poison, others made ineffectual the power of evil spirits and magicians.

"Giafar, the founder of the Barmecides, being obliged to fly from Persia, his native country, took refuge at Damascus, and implored the protection of the Caliph Soliman. When he was presented to that prince, the Caliph suddenly changed colour, and commanded him to retire, suspecting he had poison about him.

* As related by Josephus.

Soliman had discovered it by means of *ten stones* which he wore upon his arm. They were fastened there like a bracelet, and never failed to strike against each other and make a slight noise, when any poison was near. Upon enquiry, it was found that Giafar carried poison in his ring, for the purpose of self-destruction, in case he had been taken by his enemies."—*Marigny*.

Sir Walter Scott avails himself, very beautifully, of that power of detecting poison attributed to the Opal.

Belief in the efficacy of amulets is too pleasing to be easily laid aside; and probably will, in some degree, exist as long as the pain of fear or the pleasure of security. I was shown, last evening, in company with a young Greek of Athens, an amulet which had belonged to his deceased companion. It was a little square case, of silver, suspended from a chain, in order to be worn about the neck in the manner of a miniature. On the outside were three small figures in relief; the Saviour, Mary, and Martha; and the case contained a thin slip of light-coloured wood, about an inch in breadth, and an inch a half in length, delicately carved, and representing a figure on horseback. This wood was supposed, by its former possessor, to be a fragment of the real cross. The Greek youth in whose presence it was shewn, has been educated by a gentleman of the south of England, and now living at the foot of Skiddaw with his enchanting lady. The protectors are all generosity, the youth all gratitude; and nothing can be more interesting than their family circle. The latter recollected some of the airs of his native country, which were wild and sweet, and, accompanied by the pianoforte, had a fine effect; and it was difficult to forbear thinking of those lyres which, once, might possibly have thrilled to them.

Keswick, April 19, 1831.

(12) "*By magic skill, some philtre with his wine.*"

The ancients were much addicted to this practice, and sometimes died in consequence of mixtures secretly thrown into their drink or

food, for the purpose of securing their love for particular persons. A pretty incident of the kind is introduced into that very entertaining work, "*Les Voyages d'Antenor*." According to Josephus, the immediate cause of the execution of Mariamne was Herod's fear of such experiments. Sending for this Queen, in a violent fit of fondness, he met nothing but coldness and reproaches in return; and while stung to the soul at her behaviour, his mother and sister took the opportunity to inform him that Mariamne had prepared for him a love-potion.

(13) "*Or there's in her blue eye some wicked light.*"

The fear of hurtful influences emanating from the eyes of persons suspected of magic was common to most nations of antiquity; and perhaps, is not yet entirely laid aside in some parts of Europe.

"Les Thessaliens, les Illyriens, et les Triballes étoient célèbre par leurs enchantemens. Les derniers, selon Pline, pouvoient faire périr des animaux et des enfans par leurs seule regards.

"Les anciens craignoient les regards des envieux autant pour euxmêmes que pour leurs enfans; c'est pourquoi ils attachoient les mêmes amulettes au cou de leurs enfans: ils en mettoient aux jambs des portes, de manière qu'en les ouvraut on agitoit ces phallus, et on ébranloit les clochettes."—*Voyages d'Antenor*.

(14) "*And twines her long hair round him as he sings.*"

This act was often resorted to as the most forcible manner of imploring protection. When the young Prince Cyrus was brought before his brother, Artaxerxes, whose throne he had attempted to usurp, Parysates, his mother, entwined him with her hair, and by tears and entreaties succeeded in saving him from death.

(15) "*He died of love; or the o'erperfect joy
Of being pitied,—prayed for,—prest by thee.*"

Zimmerman, in his admired work on Solitude, gives an instance of two Italian lovers, who, after having been separated, sprang

into each other's embrace, and both died immediately. Joy is seldom perfect enough to kill; but could it exist as free from the alloy of any other sensation as grief is sometimes felt, it would probably destroy life much sooner from the circumstance of mortal nerves being far less accustomed to it. "Many," says Dr Goldsmith, "die of grief, but who was ever known to die of joy?" Instances of the latter, though rare, are sometimes found.

I was told by a lady, whose word there was not the least reason to doubt, of a person she had known who was passionately fond of music. She had heard him say, while listening to a concert of sacred compositions, "I shall certainly die if I hear many more of these strains." A few years afterwards, the same person actually fell dead while assisting at a concert. This happened in a country where education and every custom tends rather to the annihilation than the culture of any deep or violent emotion.

(16) "*But gained a bliss frail nature could not bear.*"

Excessive joy, by preventing sleep (as it invariably does, in a person capable of feeling it at all) very soon procures for itself a mitigation proceeding from corporeal uneasiness; were this not the case, it would soon terminate in death or madness, even though not felt in a very unusual degree.

Past joy is a thing so pleasant to speak upon, that raptures are generally exaggerated in the telling. When really intense, as they are sometimes described, their power to produce death can scarcely be doubted. Every one has heard of Chilo's death in the arms of his son, who returned victorious from the Olympic Games.

(17) "—— *it is whispered that the unquelled desires
Another spirit for each forfeit seat,
Left vacant by our fall.*"

It was an idea generally entertained by the fathers, that the many vacancies caused by the different orders of angels who fell, through love or ambition, were to be filled up by souls selected

from the human species. Another opinion afterwards arose, and was favoured by one or more of the Popes, that it was only the tenth order of the celestial hierarchy which supplied angels, who, by falling, assimilated themselves to the inhabitants of earth, and that it is only to supply the deficiencies of that grade that the best of mortals will be promoted." Much interesting speculation on this subject may be found in the works of Dionysius, to which I had free access while at Paris, but no time to make extracts or translations.

(18) "*Oh ! my loved Hyacinth ! when as a god
I hurled the disk ; and, from thy hapless head,
The pure bright blood made flowers upon the sod.*"

This and other passages which serve to identify Zophiël with Apollo, are perfectly conformable to a belief *once* acknowledged by every Christian.

An able writer in the *North American Review** appears to have read a great deal on the subject ; the following is not irrelative :—
"Some evil spirits, or fallen angels, whom the fathers had cast out, were compelled by the fire of exorcism to confess that they were the same who had inspired the heathen poets ; and these with all the duties of 'gay religions full of pomp and gold,' were confined to the doom of that infernal host described by Milton. So far were the Christians from denying the existence of any of the beings of Pagan Mythology, that they continually urged, as an argument in favour of the superiority and divinity of their faith, the power which it gave over them ; and Eunapius (see Eunapius' life of Porphyry in his *Vitæ Philosophorum*) very gravely mentions the story of Porphyry's expelling a demon."

M. de Fontenelle wrote his '*Histoire des Oracles*' expressly to prove that heathen temples were not inhabited by demons or

* The above extract is from an article entitled 'Ancient and Modern Poetry,' which appeared sometime between the years twenty-one and four.

fallen angels. In that work is found the following oracle extracted from the writings of Eusebius. "Unhappy priest (said Apollo to one of his ministers,) ask me no more concerning the divine Father; nor of his only Son; nor of that Spirit which is the soul of all things: it is that spirit which expels me for ever from these abodes."

(19) "————— *dejected Egla went*

With all her house; and seeks her own acacia grove."

The facility with which the young king of Media forgets his beautiful captive, setting aside the effect produced by the premature death of Altheëtor his preserver, agrees perfectly with the following description.

"Nous rencoutrames une troupe à cheval leste et brillant, à la tête de laquelle étoit le jeune Pharnabaze, l'air serein et radieux, faisant caracoler son cheval, et plaisantant avec ses camarades; j'en fus étourdis: je l'avois vue, la veille, désespéré; s'arrachant les cheveux, se jettant sur le corps de la belle Statira; invoquant la mort, voulant se poignarder; et, déjà, la rire, le plaisir, avoit succédés à ce grand désespoir."—*Voyages d'Anténor.*

CANTO THE THIRD.

PALACE OF GNOMES.

ARGUMENT.

Midnight.—Zophiël and Phraërión sit conversing together near a ruin on the banks of the Tigris.—Zophiël laments his former crimes ; speaks of a change in his designs ; dwells on the purity of his love for Eglâ ; and expresses a wish to preserve her life and beauty beyond the period allotted to mortals.—Phraërión is induced to lead the way to the palace of Tahathyam.—Palace and banquet of Gnomes.—Zophiël, by force of entreaty and promise, obtains from Tahathyam a drop of the elixir of life.

CANTO THE THIRD.

PALACE OF GNOMES.

I.

'Tis now the hour of mirth, the hour of love,
The hour of melancholy: Night, as vain
Of her full beauty, seems to pause above,
That all may look upon her ere it wane.

II.

The heavenly angel watched his subject's star (1)
O'er all that's good and fair benignly smiling;
The sighs of wounded love he hears, from far;
Weeps that he cannot heal, and wafts a hope beguiling.

III.

The nether earth looks beauteous as a gem;
High o'er her groves in floods of moonlight laving,
The towering palm displays his silver stem,*
The while his plummy leaves scarce in the breeze are waving.

* The trunk of the palm-tree is of a light dove or ash-colour, and assumes a silvery appearance by moonlight.

IV.

The nightingale among his roses sleeps ;
 The soft-eyed doe in thicket deep is sleeping ;
 The dark green myrrh her tears of fragrance weeps, (2)
 And, every odorous spike * in limpid dew is steeping.

V.

Proud prickly cerea, now thy blossom 'scapes (3)
 Its cell ; brief cup of light ; and seems to say,
 " I am not for gross mortals : blood of grapes—
 And sleep for them ! Come spirits, while ye may ! "

VI.

A silent stream winds darkly through the shade,
 And slowly gains the Tigris, where 'tis lost ;
 By a forgotten prince, of old, 'twas made,†
 And, in its course, full many a fragment crost

* For an account of the "spikenard of the ancients," Sir William Jones may be referred to with pleasure. One species of it is said to have been discovered by the horses and elephants of the vazir Afufaddaulah. "If the spikenard of India was a reed or grass, we can never be able to discover it among the genera of those natural orders which, here, form a wilderness of sweets, and some of them have not only fragrant roots, but even *spikes*, to the ancient and modern sense of that emphatical word."

† The ancients throughout Syria (though ignorant of some useful principles discovered by modern science) were very skilful in hydraulics. Some of the earlier kings of that country had gardens with fountains and artificial streams, without the walls of Jerusalem, in a place which is now a parched and barren desert.—See *Josephus*.

Of marble fairly carved ; and by its side
Her golden dust the flaunting lotos threw
O'er her white sisters, throned upon the tide,
And queen of every flower that loves perpetual dew.

VII.

Gold-sprinkling lotos, theme of many a song
By slender Indian warbled to his fair !
Still tastes the stream thy rosy kiss, though long
Has been but dust the hand that placed thee there.*

VIII.

The little temple where its relics rest,
Long since has fallen ; its broken columns lie
Beneath the lucid stream, and give its breast
A whitened glimmer as 'tis stealing by.

IX.

Here, cerea, too, thy clasping mazes twine†
The only pillar time has left erect ;
Thy serpent arms embrace it, as 'twere thine,
And roughly mock the beam it should reflect.

* Of all the varieties of this celebrated flower, the red or rose-coloured is the most admired for its fragrance ; the white and yellow give a fainter odour ; and the azure-coloured lotos, which is a native of Persia and Cashmir, is perhaps the most beautiful of all.

† The night-blooming cereus is fond of clasping rocks, old walls, or fallen trees. It grows in profusion where these verses were written (Cuba) and produces a fruit not unpleasant to the taste.

X.

An ancient prince, in happy madness blest,
Was wont to wander to this spot ; and deem'd
A water nymph came to him, and carest
And loved him well ; haply he only dream'd ;

But on the spot a little dome arose,
And flowers were set that still in wildness bloom ;
And the cold ashes that were him, repose,
Carefully shrined in this lone ivory tomb.

XI.

It is a place so strangely wild and sweet,
That spirits love to come ; and now, upon
A moonlight fragment, Zophiël chose his seat,
In converse close with soft Phraëriion ;

XII.

Who, on the moss, beside him lies reclining,
O'erstrewn with leaves, from full-blown roses shaken,
By nightingales, that on their branches twining,
The live-long night to love and music waken.

XIII.

Phraëriion, gentle sprite ! nor force nor fire
He had to wake in others doubt or fear :
He'd hear a tale of bliss, and not aspire
To taste himself ; 'twas meet for his compeer.

XIV.

No soul-creative in this being born,
Its restless, daring, fond, aspirings hid :
Within the vortex of rebellion drawn,
He joined the shining ranks *as others did*.

XV.

Success but little had advanced ; defeat,
He thought so little, scarce, to him, were worse ;
And, as he'd held, in heaven, inferior seat,
Less was his bliss, and lighter was his curse.

XVI.

He form'd no plans for happiness : content
To curl the tendrel, fold the bud ; his pain
So light, he scarcely felt his banishment.
Zophiël, perchance, had held him in disdain ;

But, form'd for friendship, from his o'erfraught soul
'Twas such relief his burning thoughts to pour
In other ears, that, oft the strong control
Of pride he felt them burst, and could restrain no
more.

Zophiël was soft, but yet all flame ; by turns
Love, grief, remorse, shame, pity, jealousy,
Each boundless in his breast, impels or burns :
His joy was bliss, his pain was agony.

And mild Phraëriion was of heaven, and *there*,
Nothing imperfect in its kind can be :
There every form is fresh, soft, bright, and fair,
Yet differing each, with that variety,

Not least of miracles, which *here* we trace ;
And wonder and admire the cause that form'd
So like, and yet so different every face,
Though of the self-same clay by the same process warm'd.

XVII.

“ Order is heaven’s first law.” But that obeyed,
The planets fixed, the Eternal mind at leisure ;
A vast profusion spread o’er all it made,
As if in endless change were found eternal pleasure.

XVIII.

Harmless Phraëriion form’d to dwell on high,
Retain’d the looks that had been his above ;
And his harmonious lip and sweet blue eye
Sooth’d the fallen seraph’s heart, and changed his scorn
to love,

Who, when he saw him in some garden pleasant,
Happy, because too little thought had he
To place, in contrast, past delight with present,
Had given his soul of fire for that inanity.

XIX.

But oh ! in him the Eternal had infused
The restless soul that doth itself devour,
Unless it can create ; and fallen, misused,
But forms the vast design to mourn the feeble power.

XX.

In plenitude of love, the Power benign
Nearer itself some beings fain would lift ;
To share its joys, assist its vast design
With high intelligence ; oh, dangerous gift ! (4)

XXI.

Superior passion, knowledge, force, and fire,
The glorious creatures took ; but each the slave
Of his own strength, soon burnt with wild desire,
And basely turn'd it 'gainst the one that gave.

XXII.

But Zophiël, fallen sufferer, now no more
Thought of the past ; the aspiring voice was mute
That urged him on to meet his doom before,
And all dissolved to love each varied attribute.

XXIII.

“ Come, my Phraërión, give me an embrace,”
He said. “ I hope a respite of repose,
Like that respiring from thy sunny face ;
Even the peace thy guileless bosom knows.

XXIV.

“ Rememberest thou that cave of Tigris, where
We went with fruits and flowers and meteor light,
And the fair creature, on the damp rock, there
Shining and trembling so? Ah! well she might!

“ False were my words, infernal my intent;
Then, as I knelt before her feet and sued;
Yet, still she blooms, uninjured, innocent,
Though now, for seven long months,* by Zophiël watched
and wooed.

XXV.

“ Gentle Phraërión, ’tis for her I crave
Assistance: what I could have blighted *then*,
’Tis *now* my only care to guard and save;
Companion then my airy flight again.

XXVI.

“ Conduct me to those hoards of sweets and dews,
Treasured in haunts to all but thee unknown,
For favorite sprites: teach me their power and use,
And whatsoe’er thou wilt, of Zophiël, be it done!

* From the blooming of the roses at Ecbatana, to the coming in of spices at Babylon.

XXVII.

“ Throughout fair Ecbatane the deeds I’ve wrought
Have cast such dread, that of all Sardius’ train
I doubt if there be one, from tent or court,
Who’ll try what ’tis to thwart a Spirit’s love again.

XXVIII.

“ My Egla, left in her acacia grove,
Has learnt to lay aside that piteous fear
That sorrow’d thee ; and I but live to prove
A love for her as harmless as sincere.

XXIX.

“ Inspirer of the arts of Greece, I charm
Her ear with songs she never heard before ;
And many an hour of thoughtfulness disarm
With stories cull’d from that vague, wondrous lore, (5)

“ But seldom told to mortals ;—arts on gems
Inscribed that still exist ; but hidden so
From fear of those who told that diadems
Have pass’d from brows that vainly ached to know :

“ Nor glimpse had mortal, save that those fair things
Loved, ages past, like her I now adore,
Caught from their Angels some low whisperings,
Then told of them to such as dared not tell them more ;

“ But toil’d in lonely nooks far from the eye
Of shuddering, longing men ; then, buried deep,
Till distant ages bade their secrets lie,
In hopes that time might tell what their dread oaths
must keep.

XXX.

“ Eglá looks on me doubtful but amused ;
Admires, but trembling, dares not bid me stay ;
Yet hour by hour her timid heart, more used,
Grows to my sight and words ; and when a day

“ I leave her, for my needful cares, at leisure
To muse upon and feel her lonely state ;
At my returning, though restrain’d her pleasure,
There needs no Spirit’s eye to see she does not hate.

XXXI.

“ Oft have I look’d in mortal hearts, to know
How love, by slow advances, knows to twine
Each fibre with his wreaths ; then overthrow
At once each stern resolve. The maiden’s mine !

“ Yet have I never press’d her ermine hand,
Nor touch’d the living coral of her lip ;
Though listening to its tones, so sweet, so bland,
I’ve thought, — oh, impious thought ! — who form’d
might sip !

XXXII.

“ Most impious thought! Soul, I would rein thee in
E'en as the quick-eyed Parthian quells his steeds;
But thou wilt start, and rise, and plunge in sin,
Till gratitude weeps out, and wounded reason bleeds!

XXXIII.

Soul, what a mystery thou art! not one
Admires, or loves, or worships virtue more
Than I; but passion hurls me on, till torn
By keen remorse, I cool, to curse me and deplore.

XXXIV.

“ But to my theme. Now, in the stilly night,
I hover o'er her fragrant couch, and sprinkle
Sweet dews about her, as she slumbers light,
Dews sought, with toil, beneath the pale star's twinkle,

“ From plants of secret virtue. All for lust
Too high and pure my bliss; her gentle breath
I hear, inhale, then weep; (for oh! she must:
That form is mortal, and must sleep in death.)

XXXV.

“ And oft, when nature pants, and the thick air,
Charged with foul particles, weighs sluggish o'er,
I breathe them all; that deep disgust I bear
To leave a fluid pure and sane for her.

XXXVI.

“ How dear is this employ ! how innocent !
My soul’s wild elements forbear their strife ;
While, on these harmless cares, pleased and intent,
I hope to save her beauty and her life,

“ For many a rapturous year. But mortal ne’er
Shall hold her to his heart ! to me confined,
Her soul must glow ; nor ever shall she bear
That mortal fruit for which her form’s designed.

XXXVII.

“ No grosser blood, commingling with her own,
Shall ever make her mother. Oh ! that mild
Sad glance I love—that lip—that melting tone
Shall ne’er be given to any mortal’s child.

XXXVIII.

“ But only for her Spirit shall she live ;
Unsoil’d by earth, fresh, chaste, and innocent !
And all a Spirit dares or can I’ll give ;
And sure I thus can make her far more blest,

“ Framed as she is, than mortal love could do ;
For more than mortal’s to this creature given,
She’s Spirit more than half ; her beauty’s hue
Is of the sky, and speaks my native heaven.

XXXIX.

" But ! the night wanes ! while all is bright above,"

He said, and round Phaëriion, nearer drawn,
One beauteous arm he flung, " first to my love ;
We'll see her safe ; then, to our task till dawn."

XL.

'Tis often thus with Spirits: when retired
Afar from haunts of men ; so they delight
To move in their own beauteous forms attired ;
Though like thin shades or air they mock dull mortals'
sight. (6)

XLI.

Well pleased Phraëriion answered that embrace ;
All balmy he with thousand breathing sweets
From thousand dewy flowers. " But to what place,"
He said, " will Zophiël go ? who danger greets

" As if 'twere peace. The Palace of the Gnome, (7)
Tahathyam, for our purpose most were meet ;
But then the wave, so cold and fierce, the gloom,
The whirlpools, rocks, that guard that deep retreat !

" Yet, there are fountains which no sunny ray
E'er danced upon, and drops come there at last
Which for whole ages, filtering all the way,
Through all the veins of earth in winding maze have
past.

XLII.

These take from mortal beauty every stain,
And smooth the unseemly lines of age and pain,
With every wondrous efficacy rife ;
Nay once a spirit whispered of a draught,
Of which a drop, by any mortal quaff,
Would save for terms of years his feeble flickering life.

XLIII.

“ A Spirit told thee it would save from death
The being who should taste that drop ? Is't so ?
Oh ! dear Phraërión, for another breath
We have not time ! come, follow me ! we'll go
“ And take one look, then guide me to the track
Of the Gnome's palace ; there is not a blast
To stir the sea-fly ! we will go and back
Ere morn—nay come !—the night is wasting fast.

XLIV.

“ My friend, O Zophiël ! only once I went,
Then, though bold Antreon bore me, such the pain,
I came back to the air, so rack'd and spent,
That for a whole sweet moon I had no joy again.

XLV.

“ What sayst thou, back at morn ?—the night, a day
And half the night that follows it, alas !
Were time too little for that fearful way ;
And then such depths, such caverns we must pass—”

XLVI.

“ Nothing ! beloved Phraëriön, I know how
To brave such risks ; and first, the path will break,
As oft I’ve done in water depths ; and thou
Need’st only follow through the way I make.”

XLVII.

The soft Flower-Spirit shuddered ; look’d on high,
And from his bolder brother would have fled ;
But then the anger kindling in that eye
He could not bear. So to fair Egla’s bed
Followed and looked ; then shuddering all with dread,
To wonderous realms unknown to men he led ;

Continuing long in sunset course his flight,
Until for flowery Sicily he bent ;
Then, where Italia smiled upon the night,
Between their nearest shores chose midway his descent.*

XLVIII.

The sea was calm, and the reflected moon
Still trembled on its surface ; not a breath
Curl’d the broad mirror. Night had past her noon ;
How soft the air ! how cold the depths beneath !

* Not far from the scene of Vulcan’s labours ; yet the regions sought by these spirits must have been very much deeper.

XLIX.

The spirits hover o'er that surface smooth,
Zóphiël's white arm around Phraërión's twined
In fond caress, his tender fears to sooth,
While either's nearer wing the other's crossed behind.

L.

Well pleased, Phraërión half forgot his dread ;
And first, with foot as white as lotus leaf,
The sleepy surface of the waves essayed ;
But then his smile of love gave place to drops of grief.

LI.

How could he for that fluid dense and chill
Change the sweet floods of air they floated on ?
E'en at a touch his shrinking fibres thrill ;
But ardent Zophiël, panting, hurries on ;

And (catching his mild brother's tears, with lip
That whisper'd courage 'twixt each glowing kiss)
Persuades to plunge : limbs, wings, and locks they dip ;
Whate'er the other's pains, the lover felt but bliss.

LII.

Rapid he draws Phraërión on ; his toil
Even lighter than he hoped : some power benign
Seems to restrain the surges, while they boil
Mid crags and caverns, as of his design

Respectful. That black, bitter element,
As if obedient to his wish, gave way ;
So, comforting Phraëriou, on he went
And a high craggy arch they reach, at dawn of day

Upon the upper world ; and forced them through
That arch the thick cold floods with such a roar
That the bold Sprite receded ; and would view
The cave before he ventured to explore.

LIII.

Then fearful lest his frightened guide might part
And not be miss'd, amid such strife and din,
He strain'd him closer to his burning heart,
And trusting to his strength rush'd fiercely in.

LIV.

On, on, for many a weary mile they fare ;
Till thinner grew the floods, long dark and dense,
From nearness to earth's core ; and now a glare
Of grateful light, relieved their piercing sense ;

As when, above, the sun his genial streams
Of warmth and light darts mingling with the waves
Whole fathoms down ; while amorous of his beams
Each scaly monstrous thing leaps from its slimy caves.

LV.

And now Phraëron, with a tender cry,
Far sweeter than the land-birds note, afar
Heard through the azure arches of the sky,
By the long baffled storm-worn mariner :

“ Hold, Zophiël ! rest thee now : our task is done,
Tahathyam’s realms alone can give this light !
Oh ! though ’tis not the life-awakening sun,
How sweet to see it break upon such fearful night !”

LVI.

Clear grew the wave, and thin ; a substance white
The wide expanding cavern floors and flanks ;
Could one have look’d from high, how fair the sight !
Like these the dolphin on Bahaman banks

Cleaves the warm fluid, in his rainbow tints,
While even his shadow on the sands below
Is seen ; as thro’ the wave he glides and glints
Where lies the polished shell and branching corals grow.

LVII.

No massive gate impedes ; the wave in vain
Might strive against the air to break or fall ;
And, at the portal of that strange domain,
A clear bright curtain seem’d, or crystal wall.

LVIII.

The Spirits pass its bounds, but would not far
Tread the slant pavement, like unbidden guest ;
The while, on either side, a bower of spar
Gave invitation for a moment's rest.

LIX.

And, deep in either bower, a little throne
Look'd so fantastic, it were hard to know
If busy Nature fashion'd it alone,
Or found some curious artist here below.

LX.

Soon spoke Phraërión : " Come, Tahathyam, come,
Thou knows't me well ! I saw thee once to love ;
And bring a guest to view thy sparkling dome
Who comes full fraught with tidings from above."

LXI.

Those gentle tones, angelically clear,
Past from his lips, in mazy depths retreating,
(As if that bower had been the cavern's ear),
Full many a stadia far ; and kept repeating,

As through the perforated rock they pass,
Echo to echo guiding them ; their tone
(As just from the sweet spirit's lip) at last
Tahathyam heard ; where, on a glittering throne

He solitary sat. 'Twas many a year
Ere such delightful, grateful sound had blest
His pleased sense; and with a starting tear,
Half joy, half grief, he rose to greet his guest.

LXII.

First sending through the rock an answering strain
To give both Spirits welcome, where they wait,
And bid them haste; for he might strive in vain
Half mortal as he was, to reach that gate

For many a day. But in the bower they hear
His bidding; and, from cumbrous matter free,
Arose; and to his princely home came near
With such spiritual strange velocity,

They met him, just as by his palace door
The Gnome appeared, with all his band, elate
In the display of his resplendent store,
To such as knew his father's high estate.

LXIII.

His sire, a Seraph, framed to dwell above,
Had lightly left his pure and blissful home (8)
To taste the blandishments of mortal love;
And from that lowly union sprang the Gnome,

Tahathyam, first of his compeers, and best,
He look'd like heaven, fair semi-earthly thing!
The rest were born of many a maid carest
After his birth, and chose him for their king.

LXIV.

He sat upon a car, (and the large pearl
Once cradled in it glimmered, now, without)
Bound midway on two serpents' backs, that curl
In silent swiftness as he glides about.*

LXV.

A shell, 'twas first in liquid amber wet;
Then, ere the fragrant cement harden'd round,
All o'er with large and precious stones 'twas set
By skilful Tsavaven,† or made or found.

LXVI.

The reins seem'd pliant crystal (but their strength
Had match'd his earthly mother's silken band;) ‡
And, fleck'd with rubies, flow'd in ample length,
Like sparkles o'er Tahathyam's beauteous hand.

* This manner of bearing the car is not inconsistent with the known docility and strength of serpents in general.

† Tsavaven signifies tint-gem.

‡ It has been said that an art once existed of composing a substance which, together with a perfect pliancy, had the colour and transparency of glass or crystal.

LXVII.

The reptiles, in their fearful beauty, drew (9)
As if from love, like steeds of Araby;
Like blood of lady's lip their scarlet hue;
Their scales so bright and sleek, 'twas pleasure but to see.

LXVIII.

With open mouths, as proud to show the bit,
They raise their heads, and arch their necks—(with eye
As bright as if with meteor fire 'twere lit);
And dart their barbed tongues, 'twixt fangs of ivory.

LXIX.

These, when the quick-advancing Sprites they saw
Furl their swift wings, and tread with angel grace
The smooth fair pavement, check'd their speed in awe,
And glided far aside as if to give them space.

LXX.

Tahathyam, lighted with a pleasing pride,
And in like guise, to meet the strangers bent
His courteous steps; the while on either side
Fierce Aishalat and Pshaämayim went.

LXXI.

Bright Ramaour followed on, in order meet; (10)
Then Nahalcoul and Zotzaraven, best
Beloved, save Rouämasak of perfume sweet;
Then Talhazak and Marmorak; the rest

A crowd of various use and properties,
Arranged to meet their monarch's wishes, vie
In seemly show to please the stranger's eyes,
And show what could be wrought without or soil or sky.

LXXII.

And Zophiël, though a spirit, ne'er had seen
The like before ; and, for he had to ask
A boon, almost as dear as heaven, his mien
Was softness all ; but 'twas a painful task

To his impatience thus the time to wait
Due to such welcome : all his soul possest
With thoughts of her he'd left in lonely state,
Unguarded, how he burnt to proffer his request !

LXXIII.

The fond Phraëriön look'd on him, and knew
How much it pain'd him here below to stay ;
So towards the princely Gnome he gently drew
To tell what purpose brought them down from day ;

And said, " O ! king, this humble offering take ;
How hard the task to bring I need not tell ;
Receive the poor, poor gift, for friendship's sake !"
Tahathyam took a yellow asphodel,

A deep-blue lotus, and a full moss-rose,
And then spoke out, " My Talhazak, come hither,
Look at these flowers, cropt where the sun-beam glows ;
Crust them with diamond, never let them wither ! " *

LXXIV.

Then, soon, Phraëriou : " Monarch, if 'tis truth,
Thou hast (and that 'tis false sweet powers forfend !)
A draught whose power perpetuates life and youth,
Wilt thou bestow one drop upon my friend ? "

LXXV.

Then Zóphiël could no more withhold, but knelt
And said, " Oh ! sovereign ! happier far than I !
Born as thou wert, and in earth's entrails pent,
Though once I shared thy father's bliss on high.

LXXVI.

One only draught ! and if its power I prove,
By thy sweet mother, to an Angel dear,
Whate'er thou wilt, of all the world above,
Down to these nether realms I'll bring thee every year.

* Diamond, it is said, is but crystal of carbon. Tahathyam, however, might not have meant to have his flowers literally covered or encrusted with diamond, but might only have used this expression to impress on Talhazak a sense of the value he held them in.

LXXVII.

Thy tributary slave, I'll scorn the pain,
Though storms and rocks my feeling substance tear !
Tahathyam, let me not implore in vain,
Give me the draught, and save me from despair !

LXXVIII.

Tahathyam paused ; as if the bold request
He liked not to refuse, nor wish'd to grant ;
Then (after much revolving in his breast),
“ What of this cup can an Immortal want ?

LXXIX.

“ My Angel sire, for many a year, endured
The vilest toils, deep hidden in the ground,
To mix this drink ; nor was't at last procured
Till all he fear'd had happ'd : Death's sleep profound

“ Seized my fair mother. I had shared her doom :
Mortal, like her he held than heaven more dear ;
But, by his chymic arts, he robb'd the tomb
And fixed my solitary being here ;

“ As if to hide from the Life-giver's eye,
Of his presumptuous task, untried before
The prized success, bidding the secret lie ,
For ever here ; I never saw him more,

“ When this was done. Yet what avails to live,
From age to age, thus hidden 'neath the wave?
Nor life nor being have I power *to give*,
And here, alas ! are no more lives to save !

LXXX.

“ For my loved father's sight in vain I pine !
Where is the bright Cephroniel ? Spirit tell (11)
But how he fares, and what thou ask'st is thine !”
Fair hope from Zophiël's look that moment fell.

LXXXI.

The anxious Gnome observed ; and soon bethought
How far his exile limited his will ;
And half divining why he so besought
Gift, worthless, save to man, continued still

His speech :—“ Thou askest much : should I impart
Spirit, to thee, what my great father fain
Would hide from heaven ? and what with all his art
Even the second power desires in vain ?*

LXXXII.

“ All long but cannot touch : a sword of flame
Guards the life-fruit once seen. Yet, Spirit, know
There is a service,—do what I shall name,
And let the danger threaten,—I'll bestow.

* Sathan, or evil.

LXXXIII.

“But first partake our humble banquet, spread
Within these rude walls, and repose awhile ;”—
He said, and to the sparry portal led
And usher'd his fair guests with hospitable smile.

LXXXIV.

High tower'd the palace and its massive pile,
Made dubious if of nature or of art,
So wild and so uncouth; yet, all the while,
Shaped to strange grace in every varying part.

LXXXV.

And groves adorn'd it, green in hue, and bright
As icicles about a laurel-tree;
And danced about their twigs a wonderous light;
Whence came that light so far beneath the sea?

LXXXVI.

Zophiël looked up to know, and to his view
The vault scarce seem'd less vast than that of day;
No rocky roof was seen; a tender blue
Appear'd, as of the sky, and clouds about it play :*

* It was perfectly in the power of optics and chemistry, of which sciences these beings were in possession, to produce the effect described beneath the roof of so vast a cavern.

LXXXVII.

And, in the midst, an orb look'd as 'twere meant
To shame the sun, it mimick'd him so well.
But ah! no quickening, grateful warmth it sent;
Cold as the rock beneath, the paly radiance fell.

LXXXVIII.

Within, from thousand lamps the lustre strays,
Reflected back from gems about the wall;
And from twelve dolphin shapes a fountain plays,
Just in the centre of the spacious hall:

LXXXIX.

But whether in the sunbeam form'd to sport,
These shapes once lived in suppleness and pride,
And then, to decorate this wonderous court,
Were stolen from the waves and petrified,

Or, moulded by some imitative Gnome,
And scaled all o'er with gems, they were but stone,
Casting their showers and rainbows 'neath the dome,
To man or angel's eye might not be known.

XC.

No snowy fleece in these sad realms was found,
Nor silken ball, by maiden loved so well;
But ranged in lightest garniture around,
In seemly folds, a shining tapestry fell.

XCI.

And fibres of asbestos, bleached in fire,
And all with pearls and sparkling gems o'er-fleck'd,
Of that strange court composed the rich attire,
And such the cold, fair form of sad Tahathyam deck'd.

XCII.

Of marble white the table they surround,
And reddest coral deck'd each curious couch,
Which softly yielding to their forms was found,
And of a surface smooth and wooing to the touch.

XCIII.

Of sunny gold and silver, like the moon,
Here was no lack ; but if the veins of earth,
Torn open by man's weaker race, so soon
Supplied the alluring hoard, or here had birth

That baffling, maddening, fascinating art, (12)
Half told by Sprite most mischievous, that he
Might laugh to see men toil, then not impart,
The guests left unenquired :—'tis still a mystery.

XCIV.

Here were no flowers, but a sweet odour breathed,
Of amber pure ; a glistening coronal,
Of various-coloured gems, each brow enwreathed,
In form of garland, for the festival.

XCV.

All that the shell contains most delicate,
Of vivid colours, ranged and drest with care,
Was spread for food, and still was in the state
Of its first freshness :—if such creatures, rare
Among cold rocks, so far from upper air,
By force of art, might live and propagate,
Or were in hoards preserved, the muse cannot declare.

XCVI.

But here, so low from the life-wakening sun,
However humble, life was sought in vain ;
But when by chance, or gift, or peril won,
'Twas prized and guarded well in this domain.

XCVII.

Four dusky Spirits, by a secret art
Taught by a father, thoughtful of his wants,
Tahathyam kept, for menial toil apart,
But only deep in sea were their permitted haunts.

XCVIII.

The banquet-cups, of many a hue and shape,
Boss'd o'er with gems, were beautiful to view ;
But, for the madness of the vaunted grape,
Their only draught was a pure limpid dew,

To Spirits sweet; but these half-mortal lips
Long'd for the streams that once on earth they quaffed;
And, half in shame, Tahathyam coldly sips
And craves excuses for the temperate draught.

XCIX.

“Man tastes” he said, “the grape’s sweet blood that
streams
To steep his heart when pain’d; when sorrowing he
In wild delirium drowns the sense, and dreams
Of bliss arise, to cheat his misery.”

C.

Nor with their dews were any mingling sweets
Save those, to mortal lip, of poison fell;
No murmuring bee, was heard in these retreats,
The mineral clod alone supplied their hydromel.

CI.

The Spirits while they sat, in social guise,
Pledging each goblet with an answering kiss,
Mark’d many a Gnome conceal his bursting sighs;
And thought death happier than a life like this.

CII.

But they had music; at one ample side
Of the vast area of that sparkling hall,
Fringed round with gems, that all the rest outvied;
In form of canopy, was seen to fall (13)

The stony tapestry, over what, at first,
An altar to some deity appear'd;
But it had cost full many a year to adjust
The limpid crystal tubes that 'neath uprear'd

Their different gleaming lengths; and so complete
Their wondrous rangement, that a tuneful Gnome
Drew from them sounds more varied, clear, and sweet,
Than ever yet had rung in any earthly dome.

CIII.

Loud, shrilly, liquid, soft; at that quick touch
Such modulation woo'd his angel ears
That Zophiël wonder'd, started from his couch
And thought upon the music of the spheres.

CIV.

Tahathyam mark'd; and casting down the board
A wistful glance to one who shared his cheer,
“My Ragasycheon,”* said he; at his word
A Gnome arose, and knew what strains he fain would
hear.

* This name is compounded of a Hebraic and a Greek word,
and signifies to move or affect the soul.

CV.

More like the dawn of youth in form and face,
And than his many pheres more lightly drest,
Yet unsurpass'd in beauty and in grace,
Silken-haired Ragasýcheon soon express'd

The feelings rising at his master's heart ;
Choosing such tones as when the breezes sigh
Through some lone portico ; or far apart,
From ruder sounds of mirth in the deep forest die,

CVI.

Preluding low, in notes that faint and tremble,
Swelling, awakening, dying, plaining deep,
While such sensations in the soul assemble,
As make it pleasure to the eyes to weep.

CVII.

Is there a heart that ever loved in vain,
Though years have thrown their veil o'er all most dear,
That lives not each sensation o'er again
In sympathy with sounds like those that mingle here ?

CVIII.

Still the fair Gnome's light hand the chime prolongs ;
And while his utmost art the strain employs,
Cephroniel's softened son in gushing songs,
Pour'd forth his sad, deep sense of long departed joys.

CIX.

SONG.

Oh, my Phronema ! how thy yellow hair
Was fragrant, when, by looks alone carest,
I felt it, wafted by the pitying air,
Float o'er my lips and touch my fervid breast !

How my least word lent colour to thy cheek !
And how thy gentle form would heave and swell,
As if the love thy heart contained would break
That warm pure shrine where nature bade it dwell.

We parted ; years are past, and *thou* art dead :
Never, Phronema, can I see thee more !
One little ringlet of thy graceful head
Lies next my heart ; 'tis all I may adore.

Torn from thy sight, to save a life of gloom,
Hopes unaccomplish'd, warmest wishes crost—
How can I longer bear my weary doom ?
Alas ! what have I gain'd for all I lost ?

CX.

The music ceased ; and from Tahathyam pass'd
The mournful extacy that lent it zest ;
But tears adown his paly cheek fell fast,
And sprinkled the asbestos o'er his breast.

CXI.

Then thus : " If but a being half so dear
Could to these realms be brought, the slow distress
Of my long solitude were less severe,
And I might learn to bear my weariness.

CXII.

" There's a nepenthic draught, which the warm breath
Of mortals, when they quaff, keeps in suspense ;
Giving the pale similitude of death,
While thus chain'd up the quick perceptive sense.

" Haply 'twere possible. But to the shrine,
Where like a god I guard Cephroniel's gift !"
Soon through the rock they wind ; the draught divine
Was hidden by a veil the king alone might lift.

CXIII.

Cephroniel's son, with half-averted face
And faltering hand, that curtain drew, and show'd,
Of solid diamond formed, a lucid vase ;
And warm within the pure elixir glow'd ;

CXIV.

Bright red, like flame and blood, (could they so meet)
Ascending, sparkling, dancing, whirling, ever
In quick perpetual movement ; and of heat
So high, the rock was warm beneath their feet,
(Yet heat in its intenseness hurtful never),

Even to the entrance of the long arcade
Which led to that deep shrine, in the rock's breast
As far as if the half-angel were afraid
To know the secret he himself possessed.

CXV.

Tahathyam filled a slip of spar with dread,
As if stood by and frown'd some power divine;
Then trembling, as he turned to Zophiël said,
“ But for one service shalt thou call it thine.

CXVI.

“ Bring me a wife; as I have named the way;
(I will not risk destruction save for love!)
Fair-haired and beauteous like my mother; say—
Plight me this pact; so shalt thou bear above,

“ For thine own purpose, what has here been kept
Since bloom'd the second age, to Angels dear.
Bursting from earth's dark womb the fierce wave swept
Off every form that lived and loved, while here,
Deep hidden here, I still lived on and wept.”

CXVII.

Then, Zophiël, pitying his emotion: “ So
I promise; nay, unhappy prince, I swear
By what I dare not utter; I will go
And search; and one of all the loveliest bear

“ Away, the while she sleeps, to be thy wife :
Give her nepenthic drink, and through the wave
Brave hell’s worst pains to guard her gentle life.
Monarch ! ’tis said ; now, give me what I crave !

CXVIII.

“ Tahathyam Evanath,* son of a sire
Who knew how love burns in a breast divine,
If this thy gift sustain one vital fire,
Sigh not for things of earth, for all earth’s best are thine.”

CXIX.

He took the spar : the high-wrought hopes of both
Forbad delay. So to the palace back
They came ; Tahathyam faintly pressed ; nor loth
Saw his fair guests depart to wend their watery track.

* From eva, life ; and nathan, to give.

Cuba. Pueblo Nuevo, July 1828.

NOTES

TO

CANTO THE THIRD.

HAVING liberty, while at Paris, to take any books I might wish from the Bibliotheque du Roi, and M. Van Praët being very obliging in looking for them, it was in my power to make much more copious notes than will appear to this Canto, which, from its subject, admits of a great variety. Many obstacles and engagements occurred to prevent ; which I regret only, because many passages of the old Christian writers and their Pagan contemporaries on the subject of angels and other spirits, are extremely curious and entertaining. Sufficient poetical authority is, however, given for the incidents of the story, and the text, perhaps, is sufficiently explained. Copious notes extracted from the works of others, indicate nothing but toil and patience in the writer.

(1) "*The heavenly angel watched his subject star.*"

This line is in accordance with the belief that the stars are guarded by celestial intelligences, to the prevalence of which many passages in the sacred writings bear testimony, and from which may be inferred a possibility that each inhabited and separate planet may, in reality, be under the care of some delegate spirit. Saturninus of Antioch taught that "the world and its first inhabitants were created by seven angels, which presided over the seven planets;" and that "the work was carried on, without the

knowledge of the *benevolent deity*, and in opposition to the material principle. The former, however, beheld it with approbation, and honoured it with several marks of his beneficence."

Many singular systems of this kind are classed under the name of heresies by Mosheim.

(2) "—— *Myrrh her tears of fragrance weeps.*"

I had hoped to see the plant myrrh in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, but was disappointed. Its appearance, however, can be easily conceived by the following:—"Mr Bruce, while in Abyssinia, made some remarks on the myrrh tree, which are to be found in the 'Journal de Physique,' &c., tome xiii. 1778. He (Bruce) says, that the naked troglodites brought him specimens of myrrh, of which both the leaves and bark bore a great resemblance to the *acacia vera*." Among the leaves he observed some straight prickles about two inches in length. He likewise mentions seeing a *saffa tree*, which was a native of the myrrh country, covered with beautiful crimson flowers. Drops of perfume distil from this tree which probably harden into that substance called myrrh, which is common in medicine. In one of the letters of M. Démonstier's delightful work on Mythology, the young Adonis is represented as pointing to a myrrh tree, and exclaiming, "Helas! ces larmes precieuses sont les pleurs de ma mère!" who, according to the fable, was metamorphosed by the gods in compassion to her grief.

(3) "*Proud prickly cerea, now thy blossom 'scapes
Its cell.*"

Few persons have seen the blossom of this astonishing flower, because it only opens at or after midnight, and is so evanescent, that, unless constantly watched, it is difficult to know the exact time of its perfection. It is large and of a yellowish white, and, in its cup, or, rather, in the midst of its fragrant petals, there is an appearance of lambent light or flame, resembling burning nitre.

(4) “ *To share its joys, assist its vast design*

With high intelligence ; oh, dangerous gift.”

It is said that the angels who rebelled were among the most wise and powerful of celestial creatures. None of them were more resplendent in beauty than Lucifer, who drew with him, when he fell, a third part of the stars of heaven.

The supposition that many beings, subordinate to the Supreme will, were employed in that disposition of matter called “The Creation,” is not only according to every system of religion, but agreeable to all analogy. “God said let there be light, and light was.” The King of Persia commanded a temple to be built, and it rose. There is little more reason to believe that the first was accomplished without multiplied means and agency than the last. Everything in natural history, and in natural philosophy favours the idea of an infinity of beings to supply the gradations between man and the Sovereign of creation. Indeed, after thinking a little on the subject, it seems almost absurd to believe the contrary. This belief, besides, is far more pleasing in itself than that of regarding the Supreme giver of life only as an all-competent artizan.

M. l'Abbé Poule, discoursing upon a future state of existence, gives the following passage :—

“ Il ne seront plus caché, pour nous, ces êtres innombrable, qui échappent à nos connoissances par leur éloignement ou par leur petitesse ; les différentes parties qui compose le vaste ensemble de l'univers ; leur structures, leur rapport, leur harmonie ; ils ne seront plus des enigmes, pour nous, ces jeux surprenans, ces secrets profonds de la nature, ces ressorts admirable que la providence emploie pour la conservation et la propagation de tous les êtres.”

I translate from the French of M. de Chateaubriand, the following delightful passage :—“The sovereign happiness of the elect is a consciousness that their joys are never to be terminated. They are incessantly in the same delicious state of mind, as a mortal who has just performed a good or heroic action ; a man of genius who has just given birth to a sublime conception ; of a person in the

first transports of an unforbidden love, or the charms of a friendship made certain by a long series of adversity. The nobler passions are not extinguished by death, in the hearts of the just; and whenever they are found, even on earth, respire something of the grandeur and eternity of the supreme intelligence.

(5) "*That vague wondrous lore*

"But seldom told to mortals; arts on gems

Inscribed that still exist; but hidden so,

From fear of those who wrote, that diadems

Have passed from brows that vainly ached to know."

It is said to have been believed by the Egyptians that many *wonderful secrets* were engraved by one of the Mercuries, on tablets of emerald, which still remain hidden in some part of their country.

Being assisted by a friend in looking over the first part of Brucker's "*Historia Critica Philosophæ*" for something concerning these tablets of emerald, we were soon disappointed by the following passage:—

"Non detenibimus itaque lectorem fabularum de Mercurio Græcarum atque Latinarum recitatione, quas qui legere vult, apud Liliū Gyrāldū (Lugd. Bat. 1698. 4.) vel Natalem Comitē (Mythol. L. V. c. 5. p. m. 439) aliosque mythologiæ veteris interpretes abunde inveniet unde sitem extinguat."—To those authors, therefore, the reader is referred.

Some of the fathers (Tertullian in particular) supposed that all impious and daring sciences, such as Magic and Alchemy, came to the heathen nations through the medium of fallen angels, who, during the violence of their love for particular women, would sometimes reveal to them doctrines and truths which could never otherwise have been conceived by their poets and philosophers.

Petrarch, in a letter to Robert, King of Naples, says—"The expectation which our faith presents was unknown to the heathen

philosophers ; but they felt that the soul was not to die." Pherecydes was the first among them who openly maintained it. Pherecydes most probably conceived his belief from *old and vague* traditions, confirmed by his own feelings and experience.

"Epicurus," continues Petrarch, "was the only one who denied it. From Pherecydes it passed to Pythagoras, from Pythagoras to Socrates, from Socrates to Plato ; and Cicero established this doctrine in his discourses on friendship, old age, and other parts of his works."

The lives of all these philosophers, that of Socrates in particular, rather confirm than disprove the belief of the fathers respecting communications from a higher order of beings.

(6) "*Though like thin shades or air, they mock dull mortals' sight.*"

The discoveries effected by chemistry and natural philosophy, although they make apparent the fallacy of many superstitions, do not in the least disprove the existence of spiritual creatures. After hearing explained the nature of light and heat, and observing the effects produced by many common experiments, it is not difficult to conceive of beings, powerful, beautiful, and exquisitely organized ; yet of a material so refined and subtle, as easily to elude the most perfect animal perception.

(7) "*The palace of the Gnome Tahathyam.*"

In respect to the birth of Tahathyam and his court, I have followed the opinion of Tertullian and others. The beings, however, which are described in the text, *can* only be called *Gnomes*, from their residence in the earth, and their knowledge of mineralogy and gems. The

"Four dusky spirits, by a secret art,

Taught by a father thoughtful of his wants ;"

which "Tahathyam kept" in his immediate service, might have answered the description of the Comte de Gabalis.

“ La terre est remplie presque jusqu’ au centre de *gnomes*, gens de petites statures, gardiens des tresors, des mineraux, et des pierreries. Ceux ci sont ingénieux, amis de l’homme et faciles à commander. Les *gnomides*, leurs femmes, sont petites mais fort agréables et leur habit et fort curieux.”

“ Les *gnomes* et les sylphes sont mortels, mais cessent d’être mortel du moment qu’ils épousent une de nos filles.”

“ *De la naquit l’erreur des premiers siècles, de Tertulien, du martyr Justin, de Lactance, de Cyprien, de Clement d’Alexandrie, d’Anthagore philosophe Chétien, et généralement de tous les ecrivains de ce tems là. Ils avoient appris que ces demi-hommes elementaires avoient recherché le commerce des filles; et ils ont imaginé que la chute des anges n’étoit venue que de l’amour dont ils s’étoient laissés toucher pour les femmes. Quelques gnomes desireux de devinir immortels avoient voulu gagner les bonnes graces de nos filles, et leur avoient apportées des pierreries dont ils sont gardiens naturels: et ces auteurs ont crû s’appuyans sur le livre d’Enoch mal-entendu, que c’étoient des pièges que les anges amoureux avoient préparés pour mieux en assurer la conquite.*”—*Comte de Gabalis.*

Though not immediately relative to the subject, I cannot forbear inserting the following curious account of Sylphs:—

“ L’air est pleine d’une innombrable multitude de peuple de figure humaine, un peu fiers en aparence; mais dociles en effet: officieux aux sages, et ennemies des sots et des ignorans. Leurs femmes et leurs filles sont des beautés mâles telles qu’on depeint les amazones.”—*Le même.*

(8) “ *Had lightly left his pure and blissful home,
To taste the blandishments of mortal love.*”

In the book of Enoch, two hundred or more of such angels as Cephroniel are said to have descended on Mount Hermon, for the purpose of visiting women of whose beauty they had become ena-

moured. Tertullian regards this book as of sacred authority, as will be seen in the article, "De Habitu Muliebri;" but some of the other fathers are disinclined to believe it.

(9) "*The reptiles, in their fearful beauty, drew
As if from love, like steeds of Araby;—
Like blood of lady's lip their scarlet hue.*"

The docility, and even affection of the serpent, is sufficiently known and attested. Some chemical arts might have been used, to give the scales of these their scarlet colour, surrounded as they were by beings of such exquisite skill. Little serpents, however, of a bright glossy scarlet, are not uncommon in America, and (if the Count de Buffon, and his admirer and frequent translator, Dr Goldsmith, are to be relied on) the snake, as long as it lives, continues to increase, having no fixed dimensions allotted to it, like other animals. These most pleasing writers (if I am not much mistaken) believe also that no particular bound is set to its vitality; and that it is capable of retaining life and youth so long as it can be preserved from accidents.

The following account of the celebrated exploit of Prometheus, which M. de Lentier puts into the mouth of an old Grecian or Assyrian mariner, may not be unentertaining.

Prometheus having made a statue of clay, mixed with it levin of gall, flesh of the aspic, and foam of the lion. But the figure was still an insensible mass: Prometheus stole fire from the sun, and man was animated. Scarcely had he drawn a breath ere he complained to the gods of the fatal gift of life: pain was his first sensation. Jupiter, to console him and mitigate his sufferings, gave him a drug that had the virtue of restoring youth. The man was delighted with the present, and placed it on an ass, for the purpose of conveying it to his own abode.

The beast, tormented with thirst, stopped on his way at a fountain guarded by a serpent. The wicked reptile would not suffer him to drink, except on condition that the drug should, meanwhile, be left in its care. The ass consented, and the serpent kept the

drug. From that time the serpent has had power to renew its youth, while poor human beings grow old without remedy.

- (10) "*Bright Ramaöur followed on, in order meet,
Then Nahalcoul aad Zotzaraven, best
Beloved, save Rouämasak, of perfume sweet ;
Then Talhazak and Marmorak.*"

These names are formed from Hebraic words, expressive of the various qualities and employments of the beings who bear them.

Aishalat signifies fire-control ; Psaämayim, black-water ; Ramaöur, light-direct ; Nahalcoul, guide-sound ; Zotzaraven, shape-spar ; Rouämasak, mingle-air ; Talhazak, dew-congeal ; Marmorak, (partly Greek) marble-stain.

Nothing can be more barbarous than Hebrew words, as they are pronounced in English. They are, however, much softer on the lips of Oriental speakers, or even those of the south of Europe. Some of the dialects of the Aborigines of America, though they look so repulsively, as we get them on paper, are soft as the murmur of the forest, when spoken by forest orators.

- (11) "*Where is the bright Cephroniel ? Spirit, tell
But how he fares.*"

Tahathyam has never seen his father since first established in his submarine kingdom, and knows not whether he has been received again into heaven, or remains still wandering about in a state of punishment. The crimes of those angels made guilty only by their intercourse with mortals, were supposed to have been punished less severely, than those of the subordinates of the prince of Ambition.

- (12) "*That baffling, maddening, fascinating art,
Half told by Sprite most mischievous, that he
Might laugh to see men toil, then not impart.*"

Some alchymists still exist, who have not laid aside the hope of success in their labours.

In Voltaire's "Life of Charles XII," is related the following circumstance :—"A certain Livonian, who was an officer in the Saxon army, and named Paikel, was made prisoner by the troops of Charles, and condemned to be decapitated at Stockholm. Before the execution of his sentence he found means to inform the senate that he was in possession of the secret of making gold, which, on condition of pardon, he would communicate to the King. The experiment was made in prison, in presence of Colonel Hamilton and the magistrates of the city; the gold found in the crucible, after the experiment, was carried to the mint at Stockholm, and a judicial report made to the senate, which appeared so important, that the Queen-mother ordered the execution to be suspended until the King could be informed of so singular an event, and transmit his orders to Stockholm. Charles answered, that he had refused the pardon of the criminal to his relations, and that he would never grant to interest what he had refused to friendship.

After viewing the fable of Midas, *in connection with the belief of the fathers*, it is not difficult to imagine that the secret of alchymy was actually imparted to that King by a fallen angel, who caused himself to be adored as the god Bacchus; and the disastrous consequences that must necessarily ensue, provided such an art could be obtained, are forcibly depicted in the sufferings of Midas.

Gold, like everything else not absolutely necessary to existence, would cease to be valued as soon as it became plenty; but nothing would, perhaps, occasion more dreadful immediate misery, than a possibility of procuring it easily.

The secret of alchymy, even if it could be discovered, would bring with it nothing delightful; but it is pleasant to imagine a glimpse of possibility of discovering, sooner or later, the means of preserving mortal life beyond its present imperfect term.

It has always seemed to me (whether any other person has thought the same, I know not) that something in favour of this possibility may be inferred from a passage in the Mosaic account of the fall. The first pair are driven from the garden, lest, having

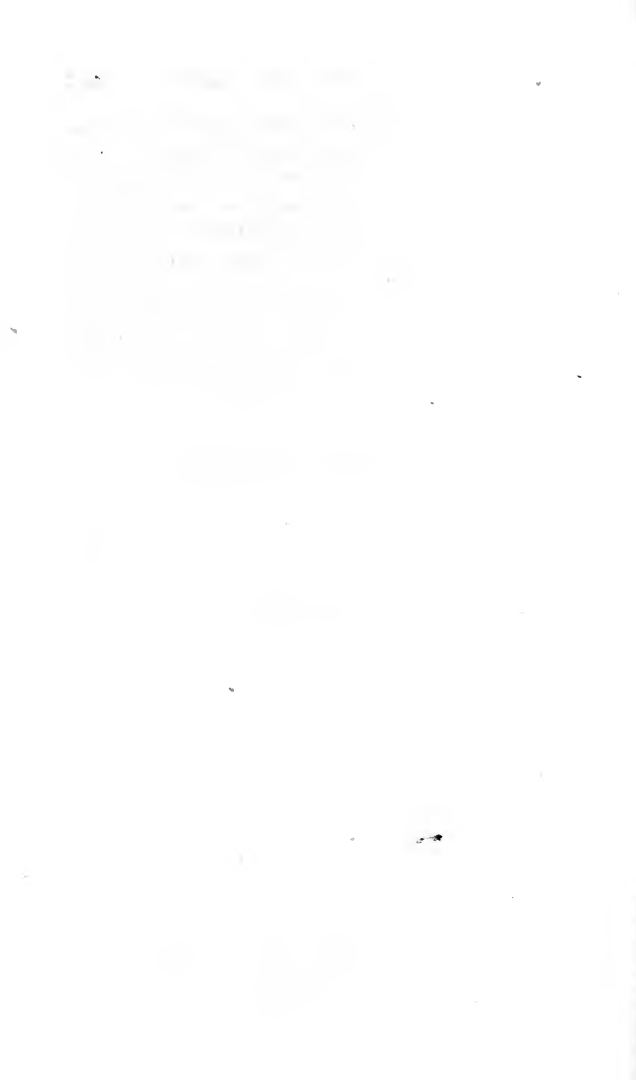
tasted the tree of *knowledge*, they might pluck, also, of the tree of life, and *live for ever*. Is this an allegory; or to what does the passage relate?

“The animals (says Father Jerom Dandini, in his ‘Voyage to Mount Libanus,) eat a certain herb, which causes their teeth to change to a golden colour.” This herb Father Jerom thinks must proceed from mines under Mount Ida. And Niebulir mentions that the Eastern alchymists fancy their success would be certain, provided they could find out the herb which tinges the colour of the flesh of the sheep that eat it.

(13) “*In form of canopy was seen to fall
The stony tapestry.*”

There now exists, either in Virginia or some of the neighbouring country (I have no reference and do not recollect this particular), a singularly beautiful grotto, called, by those who live around it, *Wyer's Cave*. It contains several apartments, in some of which the concretions are said by those who have seen them to be spread over the sides and roof in the form of curtains and festoons. One of the chambers is extremely remarkable. It is commonly called the “Lady's Drawing-room;” and on one side of it a crystalline projection is shown, which rings, at the touch, in such a manner that the person whose description I saw, fancied a skilful hand might draw music from it. Many curious and extensive caverns are found in the island of Cuba. One near the bay of Matanzas is often visited by strangers, but nobody has ventured to penetrate far. I visited one twenty miles distant from this, and not far from the estate San Patricio, which contained three apartments and a reservoir of water; being a great deal above the surface of the earth, on the side of a pleasant hill, it would not, in that climate, have been very uncomfortable as a residence. Some of the concretions had attained the shape of large and perfect columns; others were in the form of two acute pyramids or obelisks, one depending from the roof and the other rising from the floor. These were of

a whitish colour ; but though evening came on and we had two or three tapers, I could see nothing transparent or sparkling. This grotto is on either the Caf  tal Teresa or the one adjoining it ; the boundaries of both were covered with wood. There is another, deeper in the earth, about six or seven English miles from Matanzas, on the estate of Octavius Mitchell, Esq. from which I was shown specimens of spar of the size and shape of a common quill, and clear like glass. Some beautiful concretions, or perhaps petrifications were also found there, which were said to bear some resemblance to groups of sculpture. These I did not see, but one was taken out and named the "Twins of Latona."



CANTO THE FOURTH.

THE STORM.

ARGUMENT.

The gloom that precedes a tempest near Carthage.—Zophiël and Phraëriion returning from the palace of Gnomes.—Zophiël loses the piece of spar which contains his invaluable elixir, and narrowly escapes being sucked down by a whirlpool.—Zophiël and Phraëriion emerge from the sea, and rest a moment in the deserts nearest Carthage ; they attempt to pursue their course toward Media.—The storm increases.—Zophiël meets a spirit who detains and reproaches him.—Phraëriion seeks shelter. Zophiël and Phraëriion return to Media.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

THE STORM.

I.

OVER that coast whither wrong'd Dido fled
From brother's murderous hand, low vapours brood,
But all is hush'd ; and reigns a calm as dread
As that fell Roman's who, like wolf pursued,*

In aftertimes upon a fragment sate
Of ruined Carthage, his fierce eye at rest,
While hungry, cold, and spent, he mock'd at fate,
And fed on the revenge deep smouldering in his breast. (1)

II.

But now, that city's turrets frown on high ;
And from her distant streets is heard the shriek
Of frantic mothers, utter'd as they fly
From where with children's blood their guilty altars
reek. (2)

* Caius Marius.

III.

But far, far off, upon the sea's expanse,
The very silence has a shriek of fear ; (3)
And, 'cross the sight, thick shadows seem to glance ;
And sounds like laughter ring, yet leave the ear

In racking doubt if it has heard such peal,
Or if 'twas but affrighted fancy spoke :
Past that suspense, and, lesser pain to feel,
As giant rends his chains the bursting tempest woke.

IV.

Alas ! for the poor pilot at his prow,
Far from the haven ! Will his Neptune save ?
The muse no longer hears his frantic vow,
But follows her fair Sprites still deep beneath the wave.

V.

Soon through the cavern, the receding light
Refused its beam ; Zophiël, with toil severe,
But bliss in view, through the thrice murky night,
Sped swiftly on. A treasure now more dear

He had to guard than boldest hope had dared
To breathe for years ; but rougher grew the way ;
And soft Phraëriön, shrinking back and scared
At every whirling depth, wept for his flowers and
day.

Shivered, and pained, and shrieking, as the waves
Wildly impel them 'gainst the jutting rocks ;
Not all the care and strength of Zophiël saves
His tender guide from half the wildering shocks

He bore. The calm, which favoured their descent,
And bade them look upon their task as o'er,
Was past ; and now the inmost earth seem'd rent
With such fierce storms as never raged before.

VI.

Of a long mortal life had the whole pain
Essenced in one consummate pang been borne,
Known, and survived ; it still would be in vain
To try to paint the pains felt by these Sprites forlorn.

VII.

The power that made, intending them for bliss,
And gave their thrilling organs but to bless,
Had they been form'd for such a world as this,
Had kindly dull'd their powers and made their tortures
less.

VIII.

The precious drop closed in its hollow spar,
Between his lips Zophiël in triumph bore.
Now, earth and sea seem shaken ! Dashed afar
He feels it part ;—'tis dropt ;—the waters roar.

IX.

He sees it in a sable vortex whirling,
Form'd by a cavern vast, that 'neath the sea,
Sucks the fierce torrent in ; and madly furling
His wings would plunge ; one moment more and he
Suck'd down, in earth's dark womb must wait eternity.

X.

“ Pursue no farther ! stop ! alas ! for me,
If not thyself ! ” Phraërión's shrieks accost
Him thus “ Who, Zophiël, shall protect for thee
The maid thou lov'st ? Hear ! stop ! or all are lost.”

XI.

The verge, the verge is near. Must such a state,
Seraph, be thine ? No ! sank the spar within,
But the shrill warning reached him through the din
Of waves : back, back, he struggles, ere too late,
And the whole horror of the avoided fate
Shot through his soul. The wages of his sin
He felt, for once, were light, and clasp'd his shrieking
mate,

XII.

Who thus entreats, “ Up ! to earth's pleasant fields !
Oh, Zophiël, all this torture's for thy pleasure ! ”
Twined in his arms, the baffled Seraph yields,
And flies the hungry depth that gorged his dearest
treasure.

XIII.

What added torment—gained ; then snatched away—
Prest to his heart—and then, to feel it riven
From heart and hand, while bearing it to day
With joy complete as if recalled to heaven !

XIV.

That which, to own was perfect transport, lost ;
Yet still (to urge a dangerous course contending
And the fierce passions which his bosom crost
For pity, or some other hope, suspending ;)

Resisting all, he forced a desperate way ;
His gentle phère, with plaints no longer vain,
Clung closer to his neck ; nor ceased to pray
To be restored to sun and flowers again.

XV.

Thus all entwined they rose again to air,
Near Lybia's coast. Black clouds, in mass deform,
Were frowning ; yet a moment's calm was there,
As it had stopp'd to breathe awhile the storm.

XVI.

Their white feet pressed the desert sod ; they shook
From their bright locks the briny drops ; nor stayed
Zophiël on ills, present or past, to look ;
For, weary as he was, his lonely maid

Came to his ardent soul in all her charms ;
Unguarded she, what being might molest
Even now ? his chill'd and wounded substance warms
But at the thought ; the while he thus addrest

The shivering Sprite of flowers : “ We must not stay ; (4)
All is but desolation here, and gloom :
Up ! let us through the air, nor more delay ;
Nay, droop not now ; a little more essay,
I'll bear thee forward to thy bower of bloom,

“ And on thy roses lay thee down to rest.
Come through the desert ! banquet on thy store
Of dews and sweets. Come, warm thee at my breast !
On ! through the air, nor think of danger more.

XVII.

“ As grateful for the service thou hast done
I live, though lost the object of our task,
As if were still possessed the treasure won ;
And all thou wouldst of Zophiël, freely ask.

XVIII.

“ The Gnome, the secret path, the draught divine,
I know : Tahathyam sighs, beneath the wave,
For mortal bride ; valour and skill are mine ;
He may again bestow what once he gave.”

XIX.

Thus, Zophiël, renovated, though the air
Was thick and dull, with just enough of hope
To save him from the stupor of despair,
Too much disdain'd the pains he felt, to droop.

XX.

But soft Phraëriön, smarting from his toil,
To buffet not a tempest was in plight;
And Egla's lover saw him shrink, recoil,
And beg some nearer shelter for the night;
For now the tempest, bursting in its might,

Raged fiercely round, and made him fain to rest
In cave or tomb. But Zophiël gently caught him,
Sustain'd him firmly at his fearless breast,
And twixt Euphrates and the Tigris brought him.

XXI.

Then paused a moment o'er a desert drear,
Until the thunder clouds around him burst;
His flights renewed, and wished for Media near;
But stronger grows the gale: what Sprites accurst

Ride on the tempest? Warring elements
Might not alone such ardent course impede;
The wretched Spirit from his speed relents
With sense like mortal bosoms when they bleed.

XXII.

Loud and more loud the blast ; in mingled gyre,
Flew leaves and stones ; and with a deafening crash
Fell the uprooted trees ; heaven seemed on fire—
Not, as 'tis wont, with intermitting flash, (5)

But, like an ocean all of liquid flame,
The whole broad arch gave one continuous glare,
While through the red light from their prowlings came,
The frightened beasts, and ran, but could not find a
lair.

XXIII.

“ Rest, Zophiël, rest ! ” Phraërión cries : “ the surge
Was lesser pain ; I cannot bear it more !
Beaten in seas so long we but emerge
To meet a fiercer conflict on the shore ! ”

XXIV.

Then Zophiël : “ There's a little grot on high,
The wild doves nestle there : it is secure ;
To Ecbatane, but for an hour, I'll fly,
And come for thee at morn : no more endure.

XXV.

“ Nay—wilt not leave me ? then I'll bear thee through
As lately through the whirling floods I bore.”
Still closer clinging, to his bosom grew
The tender sprite ; “ then bear—I can no more.”

XXVI.

He said, and came a shock, as if the earth
Crash'd 'gainst some other planet; shivered brands
Whirl round their heads; and (shame upon their birth!)
Both Sprites lay mazed and prostrate on the sands.

XXVII.

The delicate Phraërión sought a cave
Low browed; and crouching down mid trailing snakes,
And slimy worms (things that would hide to save
Their loathsome lives) hearkens the roar and quakes.

XXVIII.

But Zophiël, stung with shame, and in a mood
Too fierce for fear, uprose; yet ere for flight
Served his torn wings, a form before him stood
In gloomy majesty. Like starless night

A sable mantle fell in cloudy fold (6)
From its stupendous breast; and as it trod
The pale and lurid light, at distance rolled
Before its princely feet receding on the sod.

XXIX.

'Twas still as death; save that the thunder spoke
In mutterings low and far; a look severe
Seemed as preluding speech; but Zophiël broke
The silence first: "Why, Spirit, art thou here?"

XXX.

It waved its hand, and instantaneous came
A hissing bolt with new impetus back ;
Darts round a group of verdant palms the flame ;
That being pointed to them, blasted black.

XXXI.

“ Oh ! source of all my guilt ! at such an hour,”
(The mortal-lover said) “ thine answer there
I need not read : too well I know thy power
In all I’ve felt and feel. But has despair,

“ Or grief, or torment, e’er made Zophiël bow ?
Declare me that, nor spend thine arts in vain
To torture more : if, like a miscreant, now
I bend to thee, ’tis not for dread of pain ;

“ That I can bear : yet, bid thy legions cease
Their strife. Oh ! spare me this resistance rude
But for an hour ! let me but on in peace ;
So shall I taste the joy of gratitude,

“ Even to thee.”—“ The joy ? ” then first with scorn
Replied that sombre being : “ dream’st thou still
Of joy ? a thing accursed, demean’d, forlorn,
As thou art ? Is’t for joy thou mock’st my will ?

“Canst thou taste pleasure? banish’d, crush’d, debased.”—

“I can, betrayer! dost thou envy me?

But leave me to my wrongs, and I can taste

Ev’n yet of heaven, spite of my fall and thee.

XXXII.

“But that affects not thee: thine insults spare

But for an hour; leave me to go at will

Only till morn, and I will back and bear

Whate’er thou wilt. What dost obstruct me still?

“Thine armies dim, and shrouded in the storm

Then I must meet; and weary thus, and torn,

Essay the force of an immortal arm,

Lone as I am, until another morn

“Shall shame both them and thee to thine abode.

There, on the steam of human heart-blood spilt (7)

By priest or murderer, make repast; or brood

Over the vile creations of thy guilt. (8)

XXXIII.

“Waste thy life-giving power on reptiles foul; (9)

Slow, slimy worms, and poisonous snakes; then watch,

Like the poor brutes that, here, for hunger prowl,

To mar the beauty that thou canst not match!”

XXXIV.

Thus he : the other folded o'er its breast
Its arms, and stood as cold and firm the while,
As if no passion stirr'd ; save that express'd
Its pale, pale lip, a faint ferocious smile.

XXXV.

While, blent with winds, ten thousand agents wage (10)
Anew the strife, and Zophiël, fain to fly,
But foil'd, gave up to unavailing rage,
And strove, and toil'd, and strove, but could not mount
on high.

XXXVI.

Then thus the torturer : “ Hie thee to the bed
Of her thou lov'st ; pursue thy dear design ;
Go dew the golden ringlets of her head !
Thou wait'st not, sure, for any power of mine.

XXXVII.

“ Yet better were the duties, Spirit dull,
Of thine allegiance ! Win her o'er to me,
Take all thou canst,—a pleasure brief but full.
Vain dreamer, if *not mine*, she's lost to thee.”

XXXVIII.

“ Wilt thou then hurt her ? Why am I detain'd ?
Oh, strength ! once serving 'gainst the powers above,
Where art thou now ? ” Thus Zophiël ; and he strain'd
His wounded wings to mount, but could not move.

XXXIX.

Then thus the scorner: "Nay, be calm! I'll still
The storm for thee: hear! it recedes—'tis ended.
Yet, if thou dream'st success awaits thee, ill
Dost thou conceive of boundless power offended.

XL.

"Zophiël, bland sprite, sublime intelligence,
Once chosen for my friend and worthy me;
Not so wouldst thou have labour'd to be hence,
Had my emprise been crowned with victory.

XLI.

"When I was bright in heaven, thy seraph eyes
Sought only mine. But he who every power
Beside, while hope allured him, could despise,
Changed and forsook me, in misfortune's hour."

XLII.

"Changed and forsook thee? this from thee to me?
Once noble Spirit! Oh! had not too much
My o'erfond heart adored thy fallacy,
I had not, now, been here to bear thy keen reproach;"

XLIII.

Zophiël replied: "Fallen, wretched, and debased,
E'en to thy scornful words extent, my doom
Too well I know, and for what cause displaced;
But not from *thee* should the remembrance come.

XLIV.

“ Forsook thee in misfortune ? at thy side
I closer fought as peril thicken’d round,
Watched o’er thee fallen : the light of heaven denied,
But proved my love more fervent and profound.

XLV.

“ Prone as thou wert, had I been mortal-born,
And own’d as many lives as leaves there be,
From all Hyrcania by this tempest torn
I had lost them, one by one, and given the last for thee.

XLVI.

“ Pain had a joy, for suffering could but wring
Love from my soul, to gild the murky air
Of our first rude retreat ; while I, fond thing !
Still thought thee true and smiled upon despair.

XLVII.

“ Oh ! had thy plighted pact of faith been kept,
Still unaccomplish’d were the curse of sin ;
Mid all the woes thy ruin’d followers wept,
Had friendship lingered, hell could not have been.

XLVIII.

“ But when, to make me thy first minister
Came the proposal ; when the purpose burst
Forth from its treacherous den disclosed and bare,
Then first I felt alone, and knew myself accurst.

“ Though the first seraph form’d, how could I tell (11)
The ways of guile ? What marvel I believed,
When cold ambition mimick’d love so well,
That half the sons of heaven looked on deceived ?

XLIX.

“ Ambition thine ; to me the Eternal gave
So much of love his kind design was crost :
Held to thy heart I thought thee good as brave,
Nor realized my guilt till all was lost.

L.

“ Now, writhing at my utmost need, how vain
Are Zophiël’s tears and prayers ! Alas ! heaven-born,
Of all heaven’s virtues, doth not one remain ?
Pity me once, and let me now begone !”

LI.

“ Go !” said the cold detainer, with a smile
That heighten’d cruelty : “ yet know, from me,
Thy foolish hopes but lure thee on awhile
To wake thy sense to keener misery.”

LII.

“ Oh ! skill’d to torment ! spare me, spare me, now !”
Chill’d by a dread foreboding, Zophiël said :
“ But little time doth waning night allow.”
He knelt ; he wept ; calm grew the winds ; he fled.

LIII.

The clouds disperse ; his heavenly voice he sent
In whispers through the caves ; Phraëriion there,
In covert loathed, to that low music lent
His soft quick ear and sprang to join his phère.

LIV.

Soon through the desert, on their airy way,
Mantled in dewy mists the Spirits prest,
And reached fair Media, ere the twilight grey
Recall'd the rose's lover to his nest.

LV.

But on the Tygris' winding banks, though night
Still lingers round, two early mortals greet
The first faint gleam with prayer ; and bathed and dight
As travellers came forth. The morn rose sweet,

And rushing by them as the Spirits past,
In tinted vapours while the pale star sets ;
The younger asked, " Whence are these odours cast,
The breeze has waked from beds of violets ?"

NOTES

TO

CANTO THE FOURTH.

(1) "*And fed on the revenge deep smouldering in his breast.*"

CAIUS MARIUS, musing over the ruins of Carthage, has been made the subject of a very good picture; and the author of that not very old Italian work, entitled 'Notti Romane,' has entered with great effect into those feelings which the successor of Sylla probably acted under. If the characters of those who commit crimes could be analyzed, it would be found, perhaps invariably, that such persons are either too stupid to be sensible of what they do, or under some illusion of feeling or imagination which entirely conceals from them its atrocity.

"Nodrito dalla sola vendetta m' inoltrai sulla spiaggia peregrinando verso Minturno: ivi mi abbattei immantinente ne' guerrieri Sillani miei indefessi persecutori. Mi gettai fra le onde a nuoto, e mi rivolei a due navi, non remote, per ricoverarmi in esse. Le gravi, provette, vaste, oppresse, mie membra faceano a stento quell' uffizio, così che il sommergermi era imminente, lo udiva intanto que' sicarj dal lido far voti crudeli a Nettuno, ed a Nereo, perche mi traessero negli abissi loro, et invocare i mostri voraci del mare; e schernire con ribalde parole quella mia trista ansietà.

"A me sospinto da continue sciagure, scacciato da ogni lido, era omai divenuto ogni terra inospitale, ogni mare tempestoso; e stetti

muto contemplando le ruine della spenta Cartagine, come specchio della fortuna."—*Notti Romane*.

Marius, soon after the scene depicted in this extract, returned to Rome, and (as he is made to express it in the same work) purged the city of its horrid ingratitude.

(2) "*From where with children's blood their guilty altars reek.*"

The Carthaginians retained the custom of offering human sacrifices to their gods, till the destruction of their city. When Gelon of Syracuse gained a victory over them in Sicily, one of the articles of stipulation was that no more human lives should be sacrificed to Saturn. "For (says Rollin) during the whole engagement, which lasted from morn till night, Hamilcar, the son of Hanno, was continually offering to the gods sacrifices of living men, who were thrown on a flaming pile." Seeing his troops put to flight, Hamilcar threw himself upon the same pile, and received, after his death, divine honours. Mothers (according to Plutarch and Tertullian), threw their children into the sacrificial flames; and the least indication of pity or sorrow, would have been punished in them as impious.

According to the belief of the fathers, it must have been the princely instigator of the rebellion in heaven who caused himself to be adored as the god Belus or Saturn, whose altars were continually glowing with the blood and flames of human sacrifices. Those angels who fell from the thirst of power must have been the authors of all cruelty. The seraphic offenders were only voluptuous. The angel presiding over licentious love is sometimes forcibly alluded to in "*Les Martyrs*" of M. de Chateaubriand.

(3) "*But far, far off upon the sea's expanse,
The very silence has a shriek of fear.*"

In the suspense and stillness which precedes a storm on or near the ocean, or any other vast extent of water, there is an effect produced on the feelings of some persons, as if a shriek were really

uttered in the distance. This effect was probably attributed, by such of the ancients as observed it, to their sea-gods or nymphs. Christian fathers or Jewish rabbins must have supposed it to proceed from those angels which, according to the books of the latter, preside over the elements.

(4) "*The shivering Sprite of flowers.*"

According to the Hebraic writings, nothing animate or inanimate exists throughout all nature, without a particular angel to protect and take care of it.

"Archangelos et angelos, quibus cura committitur Regnorum, provinciarum, Nationum, principum, et particularium personarum; quæritur igitur, num etiam animalia bruta, et res insensibiles, id est lapides, et elementa atque etiam vegetabilia habeant proprios Angelos ad sui custodiam destinatos?"—*Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica*;—*Bartolocci*.

This, whether true or false, is much more delightful than the belief or knowledge that everything depends on material laws. The Greeks had a nymph for every tree; and their religion was a mere alteration of those of the more oriental and ancient nations. The idea of the Elysian fields was, it has been supposed, conceived by Orpheus after a glance at the vast subterranean abodes of the priests of Egypt, who, as is usual, converted those sublime truths conveyed to them, according to the faith of the fathers, by erring but celestial intelligences, to purposes of the grossest fraud and cruelty.

(5) "*Not, as 'tis wont, with intermitting flash,*

But, like an ocean, all of liquid flame."

This is but a simple description of the appearance of the sky for several minutes during a storm which happened (on the island where the verses of the text were written) either in the year 1823 or 1824. I lay under a transparent mosquito net, listening to the

pleasing noise made by the trees and shrubs around the principal dwelling of the Cafetal San Patricio, and watching the flashes of lightning that darted through the green blinds of an unglazed window. It was about midnight when the loudness of the thunder-peals increased, and the flashes became more continued than any I had ever seen. A crash was soon heard from without, and the whole room seemed deluged, as it were, with flame.

Thinking the building on fire I arose, and succeeded in waking a negress, who still slept soundly by the door of my apartment. Going into the hall, and getting a window opened which looked into a broad piazza, I was surprised to see it occupied by those fierce dogs which were accustomed to be let loose at ten or eleven o'clock at night, in order that they might prowl about till sunrise and guard the plantation. They had sought shelter from the elements, and as they ran in a distressed manner from one side of the piazza to the other, it seemed as if they moved in fire; for the whole firmament continued to be, at long intervals, like a vast sea of light. Some glazed windows on the slant roof of the building were torn from their hinges and whirled over the *secaderos*,* and the rain then descended in cataracts.

The sun rose brightly the next morning, and the scene, though rather sad, was delightful. The Bermuda-grass plats were strown with leaves, twigs, and broken flowers; and numbers of those black birds which the Spanish inhabitants of the island call *judeos*, were hovering over a dark clump of bamboos which had been torn up by the roots, and uttering the most piteous cries; for many of them were unable to find again their nests constructed amidst the almost impervious foliage of those vast and beautiful reeds which now lay prostrate.

The palm thatching was torn from some of the outhouses of

* *Secaderos* are made of plaster, in the manner of broad platforms, rising a little, however, in the centre, and formed with many divisions and conduits for the rain which is retained in cisterns beneath them. On these, the red and sweet-smelling coffee berries are dried.

San Patricio. One mansion and a neighbouring estate (belonging to Don José Martinez) was taken by the tempest from an insecure foundation and set in another place; one estate, several leagues distant and near a river, was deluged, but no human lives, that I heard of, were lost.

(6) "*A sable mantle fell in cloudy fold
From its stupendous breast.*"

That many of the angels were of a larger stature than that of men, appears to have been believed by the oriental nations. Asrael, or Azaraël, who assisted in forming the first man, was, according to Rabadan the Morisco, noticed particularly by the Creator on account of his uncommon stature.

Herodotus relates that Xerxes while yet undecided upon carrying the war into Greece, was warmly dissuaded from his design by his brother Artabanes; falling asleep, soon after, he saw, in a dream, a man of uncommon stature and beauty, who urged him on to the undertaking. This, Calmet supposes, must have been some angel or spirit who sought his destruction.

It is said of Apollonius Tyaneus, that, coming to the tomb of Achilles, he raised his manes, and begged that the figure of the hero might appear to him; whereupon a phantom appeared like a young man, seven feet and a half high; which soon increased to twelve cubits, and assumed an extraordinary beauty. The whole, however, proved to be the work of a dæmon which Apollonius had power over. This incident is introduced by Byron in 'The Deformed Transformed.'

(7) "*There, on the steam of human heart-blood spilt
By priest or murderer make repast.*"

Those evil spirits or angels who caused themselves to be adored as deities, were said to subsist (according to M. de Fontenelle, who gives authority for all that he asserts,*) on the smoke of

* 'Leurs corps aériens se nourrissent de fumigations de sang répandu et de la graisse de sacrifices.'—*Histoire des Oracles.*

sacrifices. One is almost induced to believe, with the earlier Christians, that dæmons really inhabited those temples where so much human blood was spilt. It is far more shocking to suppose that so horrid an expedient could have been invented by one's fellow-mortals for the purposes of deception or interest.

(8) "*Over the vile creations of thy guilt.*"

It is not impossible that some of the angels who assisted at the creation (as is believed by all very ancient nations) might after the fall have amused themselves with making those noisome and disgusting reptiles and animalculæ which can but startle one's belief in the beneficence of the being who formed them.

(9) "*Waste thy life-giving power on reptiles foul.*"

Life, it is supposed, may exist without the slightest mixture of soul, as is the case with many marine animals. Some chemists, in the enthusiasm of their successes, have imagined that even human life was kept up by a mechanical process carried on in the lungs. This, granting it *for a moment* to be true, does not in the least detract from the power or bounty of the great Creator and fountain of soul, for of what value is any animated form unless ennobled by a breath or emanation from him?

After receiving it as a truth that such beings as good and evil angels exist, one may reasonably suppose them in possession of many arts and much science, which men, from the shortness of their lives, have been unable to attain.

(10) "*While, blent with winds, ten thousand agents wage
Anew the strife.*"

Many passages in the writings of both Jews and Christians occur to justify this. It must, however, have been some inferior angel, who (according to the continually quoted belief of the fathers) was worshipped as the god Æolus. The "prince of the powers of the air" himself must have been sufficiently employed in feasting on the exhalations of the blood of his numerous sacrifices. The god

Mars, to preserve the same system entire, must have been also one of his subordinates. The field of battle, therefore, together with the hearts that quivered on altars both in the old and new world, must have made his banquets long and frequent.

(11) "*Though the first seraph formed, how could I tell
The ways of guile?*"

The angels are supposed to have been created at different periods; they were endowed with different capacities, and had different employments assigned to them.

"Cùm enim soli Angeli supremæ hierarchiæ immediatè illuminentur à Deo, illi soli dicuntur assistere Deo; cæteri aliarum hierarchiarum, ministrantes Angeli nominantur. Itaque tam illi, quam isti sunt fere infiniti." — *Bibliotheca Magna Hebraica, Bartoloccii.*

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CANTO THE FIFTH.

Z A M E Ĩ A.

ARGUMENT.

Morning.—Helon and Hariph travelling along the banks of the Tigris.—Helon is sorrowful, in consequence of a dream of the preceding night; receives a box from Hariph.—Helon and Hariph see the Princess Zameña.—Neantes relates the story of Zameña; her appearance in the temple of Mylitta; her love for Meles; the falsehood and dereliction of Meles; her sufferings; her escape from the garden of Imlec.

CANTO THE FIFTH.

Z A M E Ï A.

I.

How beauteous art thou, O thou morning sun!—
The old man, feebly tottering forth, admires
As much thy beauty, now life's dream is done,
As when he moved exulting in his fires.

II.

The infant strains his little arms to catch
The rays that glance about his silken hair;
And Luxury hangs her amber lamps, to match
Thy face, when turned away from bower and palace
fair.

III.

Sweet to the lip, the draught, the blushing fruit;
Music and perfumes mingle with the soul;
How thrills the kiss. when feeling's voice is mute!
And light and beauty's tints enhance the whole.

IV.

Yet each keen sense were dullness but for thee :
Thy ray to joy, love, virtue, genius, warms ;
Thou never weariest : no inconstancy
But comes to pay new homage to thy charms.

V.

How many lips have sung thy praise, how long !
Yet, when his slumbering harp he feels thee woo,
The pleased bard pours forth another song,
And finds in thee, like love, a theme for ever new.

VI.

Thy dark-eyed daughters come in beauty forth
In thy near realms ; and, like their snow-wreaths fair,
The bright-hair'd youths and maidens of the North
Smile in thy colours when thou art not there.

VII.

'Tis there thou bid'st a deeper ardour glow, (1)
And higher, purer reveries completest ;
As drops that farthest from the ocean flow,
Refining all the way, from springs the sweetest.

VIII.

Haply, sometimes, spent with the sleepless night,
Some wretch impassioned, from sweet morning's breath,
Turns his hot brow and sickens at thy light ;
But Nature, ever kind, soon heals or gives him death.

IX.

Fair sun, no goodlier shape thy smiles this morn
Caress'd than Helon's, as he came from far;
A broidered scarf for girdle, closely drawn,
And sandals on his feet, like Parthian messenger.

X.

The youth's brown ringlets in the loving beam
Hung changeful, bright, and crisp; his neck and bust
Have thousand beauties, all their own, and seem
Not only moulded to proportion just,

But all his form, slightly attenuate,
As best bespeaks activity, exprest
Something unseen; as if might emanate,
Excess of soul through the material breast, (2)

That heaved and panted 'neath his garment blue,
(Which fell but to the knee) and, all about,
A warmth—a mystic charm—seemed breathing through
Each viewless pore, and circling him without. (3)

XI.

His youthful cheek was bronzed; and though his eye
Was of no vaunted hue, successive came
Of war and chase the quick variety;
But oftener tenderness lent there her gentlest flame.

XII.

His sinewy arms were bare, and at his back
A bow and quiver held their airy place ;
Like some young hunter in the tiger's track
He moved, with dart in hand, all symmetry and grace.

XIII.

But though (as rosy mists dispersed around
And birds sang sweet, and thousand insects humm'd ;)
He met with passing joy the sight and sound,
Yet sadness o'er his face full soon her reign resumed.

XIV.

Nor this escaped an old man at his side,
Whose looks told tales of many years ; but fair
He was, and for a youth beseeeming guide ;
Not Casius'* peaks were whiter than his hair.

XV.

On hair or robe nor spot nor stain was seen,
Though earth had been his bed, and dust his path :
Cool look'd he in the sun, and pure and clean,
As if in marble hall and fresh from recent bath.

* For the origin of the name of this mountain or ridge, see an article on Mount Caucasus in 'Asiatic Researches.'

XVI.

And so, he spoke :—" Why, Helon, art thou thus
Silent and sad ? the desert way we've past,
Has been a path of founts and flowers to us ;
Yet, at our wandering's close, I view thy brow o'ercast."

XVII.

Then Helon said : " What cause for joy have I,
E'en were th' uncertain dross we seek for found ?
Who now regards my gentle mother's sigh
While I am far ? and what reward has crowned

" My father's worth and truth ? Alas ! our God,
Who sits rejoicing in his mystery
And boundless power, I fear may not accord
The least of his regards to them or me.

XVIII.

" Forsake but him, and palaces unfold
Their hospitable gates to me and mine ;
Now, for a beggar's hoard, a little gold,
I go a wanderer forth, the last of all my line.

XIX.

" I gave up every youthful hope, nay more,
Would give up life as freely as a sigh ;
For, if old Zoroh live, and should restore
The treasure sought, our dwindled line must die.

XX.

“ Why beats this heart ? why is this arm so strong ?
Soon, to a little earth dissolved again,
Shall ever pen of scribe or harper’s song
Declare that one like Helon ere has been ?

XXI.

“ My sire and mother dead, around their tombs
I, like a ghost, must linger, loving nought :
Oh ! if to this our God his faithful dooms,
Cast—cast me to the flames, and save me from the
thought !” (4)

XXII.

The old man look’d upon him, mark’d his pain,
And love and pity mingled with that look ;
For on his youthful brow was swoln the vein,
And like the fevered sick his pulses shook.

Yet on he spoke :—“ Still might I, warm with life,
Back to the queen of cities ; take my place ;
Choose from the bowers of Babylon a wife ;
And bless my mother’s eyes with a new-blooming race,

“ That else is lost. What, though the fair I take
E’en from Mylitta’s fanes ? Women may be
Enthrall’d by love, and often will forsake
All other gods for love’s idolatry.” (5)

XXIII.

The old man turned and uttered,—“ Do I hear
From *Helon* this?—some evil thing—some Sprite,
While darkness reigned, has whispered in thine ear,
And tempted thee, in visions of the night.”

XXIV.

“ Some *evil* thing?” returned the youth in mood
More vehement: “ If evil things can give
Dreams such as mine, let me turn foe to good,
And make a God of *Evil* while I live!”

XXV.

“ Make thee a God of Evil?” Hariph said;
“ Too daring boy, the ambient viewless air
Teems with a race that hovers o’er thy head;
Woe to thy heart and thee if some find entrance there!”

XXVI.

“ From childhood nurtured ’neath the Baalic willow,
Where every breeze respires Idolatry,
Thy soul, even as thy lip Euphrates billow,
Has drank pollution, spite of heaven and me.”

XXVII.

“ Pollution!—Hariph, could such being beam
(So *Helon* spoke) as from a fearful death
I saved last night—(Ah! why was’t but a dream?)
She would not be unworthy—tho’ her breath

“Had been derived from Pagan sorcerer,
Priest of the Cnidian fanes, or priest of fire;
The signet of high heaven, impress’d on her,
Gives to oblivion these, and stamps her heavenly sire!”

XXVIII.

The old man turn’d, and cast upon the boy,
(Who for his fervour spoke in impious guise),
An anxious glance; but yet a secret joy
The while he thus reproved seem’d hidden in his eyes.

XXIX.

“Thy doubts and words are guilty! ’Tis not given
To son of mortal (though he even may be
O’erwatch’d and well-beloved by those of heaven)
To know what Beings sway his destiny;

XXX.

“Thy dream was good;—but, lest thyself undo
All that is done, I tell thee, youth, beware!
Curb thine impatience; keep thy God in view,
And drink obediently whate’er he may prepare.

XXXI.

“Nor deed, nor prayer, nor suffering of the just
Is ever lost: (He said; his clear eye flash’d.)
Tempt not the powers that love thee more!”—then first
The youth felt awe and dropt his lids abash’d.

XXXII.

Still Hariph spoke :—" If ever thou shouldst live
To be in danger from a potent sprite,
Recall me to thy mind ; take what I give,
And burn whate'er it holds, with perfume in his sight."

XXXIII.

Helon received a little box composed
Of carneol* ; and the sun-beams as they rush'd
Through the transparent hollow gem, disclosed
What seem'd a serpent's heart, but dried and crushed.

XXXIV.

Then bent they near a thicket, side by side,
Their friendly way ; nor more in words exprest ;
But often Helon looked upon his guide,
And seem'd communing with his inmost breast.

XXXV.

Warm grew the day ; and now, as if to mock
Their sight, with sudden wind the river swept ;
They turn a mossy dark, projecting rock,
And start,—for 'neath its crags, a woman slept,

* The carneol is a gem of carnation tint, which for hardness ranks little below the ruby and amethyst.

Pallid and worn, but beautiful and young,
Tho' mark'd her charms by wildest passions trace;
Her long round arms, over a fragment flung,
From pillow all too rude protect a face,

Whose dark and high arch'd brows gave to the thought
To deem what radiance once they towered above;
But all its proudly beauteous outline taught
That anger, there, had shared the throne of love.

XXXVI.

Rich are her robes, but torn, and soil'd; and gleams
Above her belt a dagger set with gems.
Her long thick hair, 'scaped from its braiding, streams
Black as a serpent, to her garments' hems.

XXXVII.

Black as a serpent;—Daughters of the woods,
You see him 'mid Mechaceba's roses; while
Your bright canoes upon the vernal floods,
Are thrown to bear you to some floating isle: (6)

Where sleeping bisons sail upon the tide;—
There, while thro' golden blossomed nenuphar,
Your arrows pierce some tall flamingo's side,
He rears his white-ringed neck and watches you from
far. (7)

XXXVIII.

Her sandall'd feet were scarr'd, and drops of blood
Still rested fresh on them, by tooth of thorn
Express'd; and let day's eye look where it would,
'Twere hard to find such beauty so forlorn.

XXXIX.

Near on the moss lay one who seem'd her guide;
A mule among the herbs his pittance took;
A little slave of Ethiope, at her side,
Sat watching o'er them all with many a sorrowing look.

XL.

Helon drew back, but only half suppress'd
The cry surprise propell'd.—“What strange mischance
Brings to the desert these?”—While so address'd
Hariph, the one on earth awoke beneath their glance;

And laid his finger on his lip, in fear,
And on the sleeper gazed;—she did not stir:
Then throwing from his sunken eye a tear,
He fell before their feet a suppliant for her.

XLI.

Then Helon thus: “Distrust us not, but tell
Why thou art here, and who is that soft dame?
Thyself, thine accent, and her garb speak well
That from the City of the Dove ye came. (8)

XLII.

“I’m one, (he said) by cruel man designed
The doubtful faith, in absence, to protect
Of hearts as wayward as the desert wind;
And which, despite of all, love only can subject.

XLIII.

“To care of women, nurtured from a boy,
Stranger, in me a suffering wretch you see
Ripen’d to age, but in that soft employ,
A princess’ only guard,—but frail and weak as she.

XLIV.

“Our silken limbs by biting brambles torn,
Have felt the noontide heat and drenching rain;
And that bright maid, for love and pleasure born,
Breathes to the desert blast her burning sighs in vain.

XLV.

“Yet have we lived adorers of that power
Which to the death-reap’d world a race supplies
As numerous as the stars of midnight skies,
Or desert sands, or dust from every flower*
That blossoms by the stream that flow’d from paradise.

* Phrah: the original name, the Euphrates, is thought by Josephus to signify flower or dispersion.

XLVI.

“ Divine Mylitta ! child of light and that
Which from dark nothing form'd the teeming earth, (9)
Of that which on the circling waters sat ;
And warm'd, and charm'd and ranged, till Nature sprang
to birth.

XLVII.

“ Divine Mylitta ! kindler of the flames
That light life's lamp,—in duteousness, to thee,
I brought this gem, this sun of Syrian dames,
But, now thy slave and Love's, thou mock'st her
misery.”

XLVIII.

Then Helon spoke : “ Has any wretch, more fell
Than he who first his hurtful arts essay'd
On her of Paradise, done this ? nay, tell
Thy tale ; and take, if we can lend thee, aid.”

XLIX.

“ Then listen, stranger, but for Belus' sake
Let her sleep on who hath such need of rest,”
Zameia's guardian said ; for when awake,
The flames of Tartarus are in her breast.

L.

“ She sat and raved last eve, in the pale light,
Till the fair moon she looked on seem'd to shrink
From her distress : fearing some spell or blight,
I drew her to this grot, and drugg'd her drink.”

LI.

Then softly near to her wild couch he drew,
Twining the tendrils o'er her, as he can,
To save from sun as they had saved from dew,
Then sat him on the rock, and thus his story ran :

LII.

“ The warrior Imlec by Euphrates' side
Received his birth ; there still, belike, he thrives ;
And when he took Zameïa for a bride,
His beard was white, and he had many wives.

LIII.

“ Now, when I tell thee her inconstancy,
Let thoughts of pity mingle with the blame
'Tis just to cast upon adultery,
And scorn and coldness to the nuptial flame.

LIV.

“ There's oft which, were it known, might wash away
Full half the stain of guilt : fame will not heed
The train of lesser truths ; but drags to-day,
And shows the shuddering world, all bare and black,
the deed.

LV.

“ There were who said that Imlec's life was vile,
Ev'n when possess'd of all her blooming charms ;
How could she else than loathe who knew the while
He came exhausted from an Ethiop's arms ?

LVI.

“ Whate’er the cause, she ever would rebel :
Yet when increased, her loathing pleased him best ;
And, for caprice or love, it so befel,
He built for her, apart from all the rest,

LVII.

“ A precious palace, and a garden fair,
And gave to me the charge, from every ill
To keep and guard her well ; nor ever dare,
Unless it wrong’d his love, to cross in aught her will.

LVIII.

“ So she had founts and birds, and gems, and gold,
And care of these and her was given to me ;
And Imlec (in his youth a warrior bold)
Beyond the Indus went on embassy.

LIX.

“ Do all I could, she sullen grew and sad ;
And very oft the public streets would see,
And oft (alas ! what days of fear I had !)
Her deep disgust for Imlec, spoke to me.

LX.

“ I knew his jealousy, and was afraid ;
For, if there fell upon her fame a breath,
(While treating with the Indian king he stay’d)
I had been charged to answer it with death.

LXI.

“ What could I? bland Mylitta, patroness
Of rich Assyria and her glowing fair
I sought; but no propitious sign might bless
The milk-white doves and flowers of beauty rare

LXII.

“ I daily brought : the goddess scorn'd my pains,
And turn'd from all my gifts her heavenly eyes ;
For yet, the princess never at her fanes
Of her young charms had made the sacrifice

“ Required of every Babylonian dame,
Whoe'er her lord or sire : this was my care ;
And when the opening of the roses came,
With many a native wreath I led Zameïa there.

LXIII.

“ Oh ! it was sweet to see in marble pure
The semblance of the goddess while she smiled,
As in her own eternal power secure,
She watch'd the movements of her light-winged child.

LXIV.

“ Nor e'er had icy marble took such charm ;
Save that the deity once, in a dream,
Came to her sculptor all alive and warm,
And gave him power to catch each glow and gleam.

LXV.

“ And seem’d her lip to deeper pleasure changing,
While to her temple rush’d th’ adoring crowd,
And groups, almost as fair as she, arranging
Their offerings at her feet, in soft submission bow’d ;

LXVI.

“ The tender breeze that, sighing all about,
Their musky locks with roses woven greets,
Now whispering through the myrtle groves without,
Now fainting with variety of sweets.

LXVII.

“ A fairer scene warm Syria never shall (10)
Behold, nor ever had beheld before ;
Full many a stranger throng’d the festival ;
And here, whate’er their god, how could they but adore ?

LXVIII.

“ But of the gentle votarists, some in tears,
And lips amidst their adoration quivering,
While a soft horror in their look appears,
Do all they could, with fear and doubt were shivering.

LXIX.

“ Some, form’d for faith and tenderest constancy,
But to avert heaven’s anger sought the place ;
And breathe for absent lord the blameless sigh,
And shudder at the stranger’s rude embrace.

LXX.

“ Some, in whose panting hearts the natural void
Had never yet been fill’d, all in a glow
Of dubious hope, their fervid thoughts employed
In picturing all they wish’d a moment might bestow.

LXXI.

“ Full in the midst, and taller than the rest,
Zameïa stood distinct ; and not a sigh
Disturb’d the gem that sparkled on her breast ;
Her oval cheek was heighten’d to a die,

“ That shamed the mellow vermil of the wreath,*
Which in her jetty locks became her well,
And mingled fragrance with her sweeter breath ;
The while her haughty lips more beautifully swell

“ With consciousness of every charm’s excess ;
While with becoming scorn she turn’d her face
From every eye that darted its caress,
As if some god alone might hope for her embrace.

* This might have been of the pomegranate flower, the bright scarlet of which is very becoming to a dark complexion : it however respires but a faint odour. There is also a species of mimosa, which produces a splendid scarlet flower, much esteemed by the women of those climates where it is found.

LXXII.

Soon one, in dress of noble Median, came
Fresh from repose and from the bath ; and he,
Even by less proud and less expectant dame,
Might well, as then he look'd, be deem'd a deity.

LXXIII.

“ The tall Zameïa seen from all apart,
Fix'd his black eye, and, as its glance she caught,
The opening lip, the involuntary start,
Spoke more than words. The stranger saw and sought.

LXXIV.

“ And, when the priest restored her to my hands,
Goddess, in thy propitiated power,
Let holy love now close her nuptial bands !
So prayed I as we went ; but evil was the hour

“ When from her home I led her ! some fell star,
That while the sorcerer culls his herbs malign
Favours his spell, with secret power afar
Reign'd o'er that wretched princess' birth and mine.

LXXV.

“ Through all the live-long night no sleep for her ;
She call'd me to her couch at day's first beam ;
But not on lord or palace to confer :
Stranger and festival—she would no other theme.

LXXVI.

“ I lent her bath of perfume every art ;
I spread her banquet of the choicest store ;
I bade her women touch their lutes apart,
And told her tales she never heard before.

LXXVII.

“ Warbled her birds, her bubbling fountains play’d ;
But bath and banquet all untouch’d remain ;
And to her maidens trilling in the shade,
She called impatiently to close the strain.

LXXVIII.

“ And all in her neglected charms she lay ;
Fever was in her veins ; her pulse beat high ;
And, on the morning of the second day,
She said, ‘ Neantes, wilt thou see me die ?’

LXXIX.

“ ‘ Die ! (so I spoke) Venus forfend such sight !’
‘ Then, if thou wilt not, O, my friend (she said)
Go find the lovely Median, ere ’tis night ;
Nay, dear Neantes, here upon this bed

“ ‘ Else will I spill my blood. The wall is low
Nearest Euphrates, where pomegranates bloom
Among the orange trees ; nay, wilt not go ?
Look upon this ! and who shall tell my doom

“ ‘ To Imlec ?’ Then that dagger, keen and bright,
She drew from ’neath her robe and bade me be
Content to go and find the Mede ere night.
Lord Imlec, this was treachery to thee !

LXXX.

“ But well I knew Zameia ; was afraid,
And bow’d me to the earth, and said, ‘ then be,
Thou dearest wife of him I serve, obey’d,
Though to destruction both of thee and me !’

LXXXI.

“ She took the ruby from her neck, give this,
Tis red, like my life-blood, and he will know,
(She said, and gave the jewel many a kiss)
Upon whose bosom he beheld it glow.’

LXXXII.

“ Then as a beggar all in humble guise
I sat me on the palace steps, and thence
Beheld the stranger of the sparkling eyes
Late as he came from kingly audience.

LXXXIII.

“ Then I approach’d and touch’d the broider’d tie
That bound his sandal on ; he turn’d and knew
The crimson token ; took it silently,
And, quickly mingling with the crowd, withdrew.

LXXXIV.

“ But when all past and I sat down alone.

He came again ; but, for he knew his life
For slightest wrong to Imlec must atone,

Against the hope of bliss some doubt and fear made
strife.

LXXXV.

“ “ Jewels, he said, are dim to her dark eyes

What precious gift shall match this token dear ?’

‘ One ringlet of thy black hair she will prize,

I said, beyond the gems of all Ophir.’ (11)]

LXXXVI.

“ Then I depicted how she wept and burn’d

And panted on her couch ; nor, haply, more

Would rise again to life, when I return’d

If any poorer gift than love and hope I bore.

LXXXVII.

“ Great was the meed (I said) the danger small ;

The moon at midnight down ; nor very high,

Beside the river’s brink her garden wall ;

And safe the path from every hand and eye. ;

LXXXVIII.

“ So, ere he could depart, the hour of love

Was named ; and this, my little Ethiop, hung

A curious chain, of silken girdles wove,]

Down from the wall where light from bended date he
sprung.

LXXXIX.

“ Holy Euphrates lowly murmuring swept (12)
As if he moan’d our treachery ; sadlier sang
The nightingale : her watch Zameïa kept
Until, upon the flowers, some being gently sprang.

XC.

“ It was the Mede ; and thrice returning night
With friendly veil of darkness hid their loves ;
But soon again the crescent’s silver light
Must shine upon the deeds of Imlec’s weeping groves.

XCI.

“ A light repast was set forth in a bower ;
There sat Zameïa by her lover’s side,
With heart of bliss so full, it had not power
Or space for even a thought of all that might betide.

XCII.

“ But Meles said : ‘ Should I return no more,
Wouldst thou this love’s excess, so dear to me,
For white-hair’d Imlec’s coming keep in store ?
Or should some other brave the peril scorn’d for thee ?

XCIII.

“ ‘ Were it not better, if my soul could tear
It from thy sight, that Meles went his way
In peace to seek some other humbler fair ?
Princess, my life and thine are forfeit if I stay.’

XCIV.

“ Zameïa, paler than the ivory white (13)
That formed the pillars of her couch, exclaim’d :
‘Do I not love thee more than life or light ?
And have I lived to hear *another* named ?

XCV.

“ ‘ Imlec to thee is nought ! and all in vain
His love for me : ’tis Meles I adore.
If danger come, be mine the care and pain !
Another ! let me die or hear that word no more.’

XCVI.

“ ‘ My own, my bright Zameïa’s truth,’ he said,
‘ ’Twas spoken but to prove ;’ and then he smiled,
And her, all trembling, to the banquet led ;
And love and hope are twins ; and so she was beguiled.

XCVII.

“ Another midnight saw them as before ;
With banquet spread and wine the lip to woo ;
Zameïa, ’neath her robe’s adornment, wore
A steel half hid in gems ; he saw it sparkle through.

XCVIII.

“ But well he knew (with all the tenderness
Meet for a heart whose fires so fiercely burn)
To hush her doubts. With many a false caress
He went, and many an oath and promise of return.

XCIX.

“ The bower is lit; the banquet waits; and wake
Love’s votaress and her trembling slave; but where
The lover wont to come and scarce partake
E’en of the grape’s sweet blood for gazing on his fair ?

“ Lone past the night. My beauteous mistress faints
Upon her couch; or fills the frightened ears
Of every slave with passionate complaints;
For, darkly to her soul her boding fate appears.

C.

“ Another midnight—still he had not come—
And thus she me reproach’d : ‘ All had been bliss,
Neantes, but for thee. Is this my doom?
And was I made an offering but for this ?’

CI.

“ Alas ! I answered, I am but a slave,
Princess, and thine: destroy me if thou wilt.
Shall I go look for him the goddess gave ?
Or for thy pleasure shall my blood be spilt.

CII.

“ The frailest hope is better than despair,
And many a life a timely word has saved.
She bade me to the palace; but not there
To find her Median more : the stream that laved

“ The garden where they met, at early morn,
To his own land had seen him on his way;
Nor word nor token left he, to be borne
To her who, for his sake, sicken'd at light of day.

CIII.

“ But that it had been death to tell her *then* :
What means to save, alas, could I employ?
That moment came beneath a column's shade,
To rest him there awhile, a dusky Arab boy.

CIV.

“ Quick came the thought : I gave him gold and craved
A cluster of his locks ; he gave me one ;
And black as earth-hid ebony it waved
Like those of Meles, thanks to thee, O sun !

CV.

“ In childhood, once, slave to a scribe, I sought
To trace the character and shape the reed ;
And sometimes when my lord beheld, he taught
A little of his art, and now it served my need.

CVI.

“ The choicest of the Arab's locks I clipt,
And framed a letter as from Meles' hand ;
Then, a black ringlet first in perfumes dipt,
Laid in the midst : nor words more sweet and bland

“ Could Meles of the honey’d lip indite ;
’Twas written on papyrus of the Nile,
Fragrant with rose ; as opening lotos white ;
And gold and silver dust in sprinkles o’er it smile. (14)

CVII.

“ ‘ Neath the pomegranates in the orange shade,
Where linger’d last the Median ; (such my plan)
Among the falling blossoms it was laid
In secret, ere I came ; and thus, in promise, ran.

CVIII.

“ ‘ Radiant Zameia, think upon the pain
I bear in telling thee, how many a night
Must pass, ere back to Babylon again
I come to yield my life to thy delight.

“ My soul is sick with absence ! while the will
Of an unpitying sov’reign bids me wait.
Preserve a little of love’s balm to heal
Thy Meles, who returns at gathering of the date.

CIX.

“ So, when among the flowers the scrolls was flung,
Sadly I came at having found him not ;
And near that wall where silken chain was hung,
I drew Zameia. On the very spot,

“ Where her loved Meles spoke his last farewell,
That princess kissed a camel-driver's hair,
And tears of joy (ah ! too fallacious !) fell
On what a slave's poor hand had placed in pity there.

CX.

“ Yet, though 'twas sad to see her so deceived,
I could but bless the tears her cheek was drinking ;
For pity framed the falsehood hope believed,
And so by this slight reed her soul was saved from
sinking.

CXI.

“ The gathering of the sweet and savoury date
Approach'd, and Imlec still was far away-
Zameïa learn'd to wait, and hope, and wait,
And bless'd the powerful Belus for his stay.

CXII.

“ But as the date-tree sees her blossoms die, (I5)
And blasted on the earth her fruit's soft germ,
Unless her vegetable love come nigh,
With genial power, while yet endures her term ;

CXIII.

“ So poor Zameïa's hopes, like date-buds, down
Must fall to earth unblest and immature :
Alas ! unless her Meles come to crown
With fruit, hope's blossoms cannot long endure !

CXIV.

“ The date was ripe and pluck’d ; but still there came
No beauteous Mede. Zameïa raged and pined,
And pined and hoped and wept ; what could I frame ?
With what new bland deceit bedew her withering mind.

CXV.

“ Night after night, she waked and waked ; consumed
Her full round arms ; no tulip hue upon
Her sunny cheek in changeful beauty bloom’d ;
She felt a dearth, a blight, and all was cold and wan.

“ I trembled for her life ; and on a day
When, ’neath the full pomegranates walk she must
Among the flowers, another letter lay ;
And thus it flow’d as kindly as the first.

CXVI.

“ ‘ Adored Zameïa ! if thou still dost bear
Enough of love to feel a moment’s pain
That Meles, still detain’d by toil and care,
Comes not to thee and Babylon again,

“ ‘ Though dates be pluck’d, I prithee wait a span,
For when rich spices from Arabia’s hills
Load for thy happy streets the caravan,
I come to keep the word my panting soul fulfils.’

CXVII.

“ I need not tell who placed the letter there ;
And though her reason made some little strife,
By sending doubt 'gainst hope, yet from despair
Awhile her heart emerged ; and so was saved her life.

CXVIII.

“ Again she bathed her limbs, and eat her food,
And bound her streaming hair, and clasped her zone.
Like the wild courser, by his wants subdued,
So stoop'd her soul to feed on this poor hope alone.

CXIX.

“ The Median had but lightly loved ; while she
Inhaled a flame that never ceased to prey
Upon her victim heart ; she ceased to be,
And, sever'd from herself, became, that day,

“ Appendage to another. Not the string
Of Meles' sandal, scarf about his waist,
Or feather for his arrows, was a thing
More wholly his than she, so proud ere love de-
based ! (16)

CXX.

“ Euphrates' floods are swoln with timely rain ;
Cassia and myrrh perfume the crowded streets ;
The burthen from the camel's back is ta'en ;
But 'Meles' footsteps press no flower in our retreats.

CXXI.

“ Most wretched princess ! who her state can show ?
Panting with haste a messenger arrives
To tell (Oh ! full completion of her woe !)
That Imlec’s on his way, and bids prepare his wives.

CXXII.

“ ‘ Hide me,’ she said, ‘ in some dark desert cave !
Till I can look a moment on my love !
Cast me, Neantes, to Euphrates’ wave
Ere Imlec come ! Oh, Venus ! can I prove

“ ‘ For Meles’ ardour, frenzy of the grape,
The poppy’s fœtid juice for Meles’ breath ?
Save me, Neantes, aid me to escape !
If Imlec clasp at all, he clasps me cold in death.’ ”

CXXIII.

“ Her forceful words were true : her pale, pale cheek
And tearless eye too strong concurrence gave ;
And o’erwrought passion left her form so weak,
But little more had laid it in the grave.

CXXIV.

“ A curious cincture by her mother wrought,
Twined with a tress of her black hair was thrown
To the full stream, to baffle those who sought :
But by no vestige might our course be known.

CXXV.

“ Enough to tell, upon a fearful night,
By the same silken chain that Meles prest,
The garden wall was scaled : our piteous plight,
This place, O stranger ! must declare the rest.”

Cuba. Pueblo Nuevo, September 1823.

NOTES

TO

CANTO THE FIFTH.

(1) "*'Tis there thou bidst a deeper ardour glow.*"

It has been generally believed that 'the cold in clime are cold in blood,' but this on examination would, I am convinced, be found *physically untrue*; at least, in those climates near the equator. It is here that most cold-blooded animals, such as the tortoise, the serpent, and various tribes of beautiful insects, are found in the greatest perfection.

Fewer instances of delirium or suicide, occasioned by the passion of love, would, perhaps, be found within the tropics than in the other divisions of the earth. Nature, in the colder regions, appears to have given an innate warmth and energy proportionate to those efforts, which the severity of the elements and the numerous wants which they create, keep continually in demand.

Those who live, as it were, under the immediate protection of the sun, have little need of internal fires. Their blood is cool and thin; and living where everything is soft and flattering to the senses, it is not surprising that their thoughts seldom wander far beyond what their bright eyes can look upon.

Though sometimes subject to violent fits of jealousy, these generally pass off without leaving much regret or unhappiness behind, and any other object falling in their way (for they would not go far to seek it) would very soon become just as valuable to them as the one lost. Such of them as are constant are rather so

from indolence, than from any depth of sentiment or conviction of excellence. "The man who reflects (says Rousseau) is a monster out of the order of nature." The natives of all tropical regions might be brought forward in proof of his assertion: they never look at remote results, or enter into refined speculations; and yet, are, undoubtedly, less unhappy than any other of the inhabitants of earth.

(2) "*Excess of soul through the material blast.*"

I have never observed this effect except in very few instances, and those were of persons neither brilliant for their attainments nor (with one exception) remarkable for external beauty. They were, however, possessed of most excellent dispositions, and it was impossible to converse with them without being sensible of something which could be felt and almost seen—a sort of emanation.

(3) "*A warmth—a mystic charm—seemed breathing through
Each viewless pore, and circling him without.*"

This is but a copy from the life; and the original of it was so uneducated as to be scarcely tolerable; he had made, however, the most generous sacrifices for his friends and relatives; and it was impossible to be near and look at him, while speaking, without perceiving all attempted to be described in the text.

(4) "—*Cast me to the flames, and save me from the thought!*"

Human victims were sometimes thrown into fires burning in honour of the god Baal. It appears from some passages in the Mosaic writings that the same custom prevailed even among the Hebrews.

(5) "—————*Forsake
All other gods for love's idolatry.*"

It appears that the Hebrews were not averse to intermarrying with those of other nations, provided such would embrace their

religion. "Pharaoh's daughter became, it is supposed, a proselyte; a marriage with her was not, therefore, considered a fault in their wise but voluptuous king.—See notes to *Josephus*.

(6) "*Are thrown to bear you to some floating isle.*"

For an account of those flowery islets which once floated about the Mississippi, from whose mud and vegetation they were formed, one has only to look at the beginning of *Atala*. There M. de Chateaubriand has given a description surpassed only by the exquisite story which follows.

The Mexicans, before the conquest of their city by Cortez, were accustomed to sail about its lakes on floating islets; these, however, must have been constructed by art.

(7) "*He rears his white-ringed neck, and watches you from far.*"

The ring-necked serpent is still sometimes seen in North America; it is of a shining black, with a white circle about its neck, as exact as if drawn with a pencil. From the extreme swiftness of its movement, it received from the English settlers the name of horse-racer. It lifts its head, from time to time, above the grass, through which it glides, and is said to have the power of destroying even men, by twining itself about them. If death, however, has ever happened from that cause, the cases of it must have been very unfrequent. I saw, when a child, a very young snakelet of this kind, which had been found in a cellar, and was kept in spirits of wine by the woman of the house; it was of the length of a common pen, and very smooth and delicate.

(8) "*That from the City of the Dove ye came.*"

The dove was, in ancient times, the device of the Assyrian empire, as the eagle was that of the Roman; and was adopted from a belief that the Indian god, Mahá-dévá, and his goddess, Párvatí, once assumed the appearance of doves, in order to benefit the inhabitants.

The worship of the dove was peculiar to India, Arabia, Syria, and Assyria. Semiramis, the Queen and beautifier of Babylon, is said to have been fed by doves in the desert, and to have vanished at last from the sight of mortals in the shape of a dove.

Semiramis was supposed to have been an incarnation of Párvaté, consort of Mahá-dévá, or Nature, which goddess was called Sami-rama, from a circumstance (related in one of the Puránas) of her having chosen to reside in a Sami-tree, whither she had fled from the god, her husband, in a fit of jealousy.

It is from the Sami-tree that the Indians cut the Arani, a cubic piece of wood, from which they obtain fire by drawing a cord through a perforation in the centre.

According to the fable, a fire issued from Sami-rama while performing austere devotion, which spread over the whole range of mountains near her retirement. This fire she confined to the Sami-tree, in pity to the neighbouring people.

The Arani is still called by the Indians the “daughter of the Sami-tree and mother of fire.”

See an extract from the Hindu Sacred Books, contained in the Asiatic Researches.

(9) “*Divine Mylitta ! child of light, and that*

Which from dark nothing formed the teeming earth.”

The earnest and apparently pure adoration of Neantes for this goddess may proceed from some glimpses of Oriental and Grecian cosmogony caught from the scribe, his former master. One of the Venuses is said to have been the daughter of Cœlus and Light. This personification of the soul or active principle of creation, by a form of perfect beauty, was an idea sublime, perhaps, as delightful; but, like everything else of excessive refinement, was incapable of being generally understood in the manner first designed; and soon became perverted to the sanction of a pernicious licentiousness. The following is extracted from Enfield’s ‘Compendium of Brucker’ :—

“There were different opinions among the ancients concerning the first cause of nature. Some might, possibly, ascribe the origin of all things to a generating force, destitute of thought, which they conceived to be inherent in matter, without looking to any higher principle. But it is probable that the general opinion among them was that which had prevailed among the Egyptians and in the East, and was communicated by traditions to the Greeks—that matter or chaos existed eternally with God; that by the divine energy of emanation material forms went forth from him, and the visible world arose into existence. This principle being admitted, a satisfactory explanation may be given of most of the Grecian fables. Upon this supposition, their doctrines of the Creation, divested of all allegory and fable, will be as follows: the first matter, containing the seeds of all future beings, existed from eternity with God. At length the divine energy, acting upon matter, produced a motion among its parts, by which those of the same kind were brought together, and those of a different kind separated; and by which, according to certain wise laws, the various forms of the material world were produced. The same energy of emanation gave existence to animals and men, *and to Gods who inhabit the heavenly bodies* and various other parts of nature. Among men, those who possess a larger portion of the divine nature than others, are hereby impelled to great and beneficent actions, and afford illustrious proofs of their divine original, *on account of which they are, after death, raised to a place among the gods*, and so become objects of religious worship.”*

(10) “*A fairer scene warm Syria never shall
Behold.*”

Of the festivals given in honour of Mylitta, Herodotus has given an account; and a very full and amusing one is to be found in

* This is perfectly in accordance with the Christian belief, that the places left vacant by the fallen angels are to be supplied by human souls; and some of the fathers suppose that such secrets could only have been communicated to the heathen by means of angels.

“Les Voyages d’Antenor.” No blood flowed upon the altars of this goddess; roses, apple-blossoms, fruits, incense, and perfumes, were thought more acceptable offerings. Mylitta is but one of the names of Venus.

(11) “—————*The gems of all Ophir.*”

Ophir, or Aurea Chersonesus. This pronunciation of the word is agreeable to the accent of all modern Oriental languages, which, as they are generally founded on the Hebraic, are, of course, more conformable to the ancient sweetness of a language supposed to have been that of angels and spirits, than those harsh sounds to which it is now perverted by English and North American Theologists. The present Spanish pronunciation of scriptural names is very soft and delightful.

The language in which the Koran is written, and which is universally studied and spoken by learned Mahometans, is said to be a dialect of the Hebrew. The guttural sounds of the modern Castilian have probably been remotely derived from the same source.

(12) “*Holy Euphrates lowly murmuring swept.*”

Rivers were in general held sacred by the nations of antiquity, and to wash the hands, spit, or throw anything of an impure nature into the Euphrates, was punished by the Babylonians as an act of the greatest impiety. Peleus vowed to make an offering of the hair of Achilles to the stream Sperchius, in case he returned victor from Troy.

(13) “*Zameïa, paler than the ivory white
That formed the pillars of her couch.*”

Ivory, it is said, was not much heard of till the reign of Solomon, who caused it to be brought from India to Palestine, where it was considered more precious than gold; but, afterwards, ivory beds and ivory palaces are frequently mentioned. The beautiful statue carved by Pygmalion of Cyprus, is said to have been of

ivory; marble, however, when white and pure, was, it appears, also called ivory.

- (14) "*'Twas written on papyrus of the Nile,
Fragrant with rose;—as opening lotos white,
And gold and silver dust in sprinkles o'er it smile.*"

This might have been: the Greeks, however, at a later period, wrote their letters on thin smooth tablets of wood, neatly covered with wax; these were wrapped in linen, and sealed with the wax of Asia.

According to Sir William Jones and others, the manuscripts of the modern Persians are sprinkled with dust of gold and silver. These, as well as those of the Arabians, are so very beautiful that those accustomed to them dislike to look on printed copies.

As there are many lovers of poetry who are not profound scholars, the following extract from an entertaining work may not be unacceptable:—

"Les tablettes des Grecs étaient des tables de bois, et enduites de cire: on y écrivait avec un petit stylet de cuivre, de fer, ou d'or, pointu d'un côté et plat de l'autre; ce dernier bout servait à effacer. Les Grecs portaient à la ceinture un étui nommé graphiarium où étaient renfermés ce stylet et ces tablettes.

"Les lettres que les particuliers s'écrivaient étaient sur des tables de bois mince, déliées, et enduites de cire, que l'on enveloppait de lin, et que l'on cachetait de craie, ou de cire d'Asie. A la tête de leurs lettres ils mettaient, ces mots—'Joie et prospérité:' à leur fin cette autre formale—'Portez vous bien, soyez heureux.' Les Athéniens mettaient, après leurs noms, dans leur signature, celui de leurs pères, et les pays de leur naissance; par exemple: 'Demosthène de Peanée fils de Demosthène.'"—*Voyages d'Antenor.*

- (15) "*But as the date tree sees her blossoms die.*"

The palm tree is said, by a learned writer, to be "the most curious and interesting subject which the science of natural history

involves." However that may be, the most eminent naturalists, ancient and modern, have apparently taken pleasure in describing it. A very full and satisfactory account of this surprising vegetable is to be found in the 'Amoenitates Exoticæ' of Kaempfer.

(16) ————— "*Not the string
Of Meles' sandal—scarf about his waist—
Or feather for his arrows—was a thing
More wholly his than she.*"

The old Neanthes appears to suppose this destructive passion to be no fault of his mistress; but thinks her inspired with it by their goddess, as a punishment for former neglect. Racine, in his tragedy of *Phédre*, extenuates the crimes of that Queen by a similar supposition.

CANTO THE SIXTH.

BRIDAL OF HELON.

ARGUMENT.

Twilight.—Egla alone in her grove of acacias.—Zophiël returns wounded and dejected, and sits watching her invisibly.—A being, who wishes to preserve Egla, perceives that she is beset with dangers.—Zameia dies in attempting the life of Egla.—Egla is reproached by a slave : faints and is supported by Helon ; Helon and Hariph bear her home.—Egla, about to destroy herself, is saved by Helon, who receives her in marriage, and puts Zophiël to flight, by means of a carnel box.—Hariph discovers himself to be the angel Raphaël ; seeks Zophiël in the deserts of Ethiopia, and speaks to him of hope and comfort.

CANTO THE SIXTH.

BRIDAL OF HELON.

I.

SWEET is the evening twilight ; but, 'alas !
There's sadness in it : day's light tasks are done,
And leisure sighs to think how soon must pass
Those tints that melt o'er heaven, O setting sun,

And look like heaven dissolved. A tender flush
Of blended rose and purple light, o'er all
The luscious landscape spreads, like pleasure's blush,
And glows o'er wave, sky, flower, cottage, and palm-
tree tall.

II.

'Tis now that solitude has most of pain :
Vague apprehensions of approaching night
Whisper the soul, attuned to bliss, and fain
To find in love equivalent for light.

III.

The bard has sung, God never formed a soul
Without its own peculiar mate, to meet (1)
Its wandering half, when ripe to crown the whole
Bright plan of bliss, most heavenly, most complete !

IV.

But thousand evil things there are that hate
To look on happiness ; these hurt, impede,
And leagued with time, space, circumstance, and fate,
Keep kindred heart from heart to pine and pant and bleed.

And as the dove to far Palmyra flying
From where her native founts of Antioch beam,
Weary, exhausted, longing, panting, sighing,
Lights sadly at the desert's bitter stream,—

So many a soul o'er life's drear desert faring,
Love's pure congenial spring unfound—unquaff'd—
Suffers—recoils—then, thirsty and despairing
Of what it would, descends and sips the nearest draught.

V.

'Tis twilight in fair Egla's grove, her eye
Is sad and wistful ; while the hues that glint
In soft profusion o'er the molten sky,
O'er all her beauty spread a mellow tint.

VI.

And form'd, in every fibre, for such love
 As heaven not yet had given her to share, (2)
 Through the deep shadowy vistas of her grove
 Sent looks of wistfulness ; no Spirit there
 Appears as wont ; for many a month so long
 He had not left her ; what could so detain ?
 She took her lute and tuned it for a song,
 The while spontaneous words accord them to a strain,
 Taught by enamoured Zophiël ; softly heaving
 The while her heart, thus from its inmost core
 Such feelings gush'd, to Lydian numbers weaving,
 As never had her lip express'd before.

VII.

SONG.

Day, in melting purple dying,
 Blossoms, all around me sighing,
 Fragrance, from the lilies straying,
 Zephyr, with my ringlets playing,
 Ye but waken my distress :
 I am sick of loneliness.

Thou to whom I love to hearken,
Come, ere night around me darken ;
Though thy softness but deceive me,
Say thou'rt true and I'll believe thee ;
Veil, if ill, thy soul's intent,
Let me think it innocent !

Save thy toiling, spare thy treasure :
All I ask is friendship's pleasure :
Let the shining ore lie darkling,
Bring no gem in lustre sparkling ;
Gifts and gold are nought to me ;
I would only look on thee !

Tell to thee the high-wrought feeling,
Ecstasy but in revealing ;
Paint to thee the deep sensation,
Rapture in participation,
Yet but torture, if compest
In a lone unfriended breast.

Absent still ? Ah ! come and bless me !
Let these eyes again caress thee ;
Once, in caution, I could fly thee ;
Now, I nothing could deny thee :
In a look if death there be,
Come and I will gaze on thee !

VIII.

An unknown spirit, who for many a year
Had mark'd, in Helon, passing excellence,
And loved to watch o'er Egla too, came near
This eve ; but other cares had long time kept him hence.

IX.

A lute-chord sounds : hark ! for a tender hymn
To bear to heaven, he pauses in his flight ;
Alas ! it is not heaven that lends her theme !
Nay, if he leave her she is lost to night.

X.

He starts ; he looks through the light trembling shade
And fears his coming, even now, too late :
What varied perils have beset the maid !
She verges to the crisis of her fate.

XI.

He gazes on her guileless face and grieves ;
There's treachery even in her own lute's sound ;
And things his heavenly sense alone perceives,
Unseen amidst the flowers are lurking all around.

XII.

And Zophiël too, late from the deep return'd
In such a state 'twas piteous but to see,
Watch'd near the maid whose love he fain had earn'd,
By fiercer torments still, invisibly.

XIII.

His wings were folded o'er his eyes ; severe
As was the pain he'd borne from wave and wind,
The dubious warning of that Being drear,
Who met him in the lightning, to his mind

Was torture worse : a dark presentiment
Came o'er his soul with paralyzing chill,
As when fate vaguely whispers her intent
To poison mortal joy with sense of pending ill.

XIV.

He search'd about the grove with all the care
Of trembling jealousy, as if to trace
By track or wounded flower some rival there ;
And scarcely dared to look upon the face

Of her he loved, lest it some tale might tell
To make the only hope that sooth'd him vain :
He hears her notes in numbers die and swell,
But almost fears to listen to the strain

Himself had taught her ; lest some hated name
Had been with that dear, gentle air enwreathed,
While he was far ; she sigh'd,—he nearer came ;
Oh, transport ! Zophiël was the name she breathed.

XV.

He saw but her ; and thought her all alone ;—
His name was on her lip,—in hour like this ;—
And doating—drinking every look and tone—
Paused, ere he would advance, for very bliss.

XVI.

The joy of a whole mortal life he felt
In that one moment. Now, too long unseen,
He fain had shown his beauteous form and knelt,
But, while he still delayed, a mortal rushed between.

XVII.

Tall was her form ; her quivering lip was pale ;
Long streamed her hair, and glared her wild dark eye ;
And grasping Egla's arm :—' no arts avail
Thee now :—vile murderess of my Meles,—die !'

She said ;—her dagger at soft Egla's breast
Touch'd the white folded robe—but strength and breath
Failing at once, that frenzied arm arrest
And falling to the earth, Zameïa groaned in death.

XVIII.

This Orpha saw, a slave, a sullen maid,
But beautiful, whose glance Rosanes caught,
While yet the captives at the palace stayed,
And, secretly carest, until he taught

The haughty girl, impatient of her fate,
A hope that gave her, in her lowliness,
The wild ambition of a higher state ;—
But who can paint the depth of her distress,

When he had gone to seek the dangerous bride ;
And when the following morn his death reveal'd ?
Hate, envy, love, sorrow, hopes crush'd—all vied
To nurture the revenge her withering heart conceal'd.

XIX.

'Twas she who told Zameïa of the doom
Of her loved Mede, and led her to the breast
She burn'd to pierce ;—now from her heart of gloom
Burst the deep smouldering rage, thus bitterly express'd :

XX.

“ Another murder ! sorceress to me
Tell not a spirit did it :—I know, well,
What wanton thing thou art ;—was't not by thee,
Rosanes, Meles, young Altheëtor fell ?
“ Lured by thine arts to glut a love as dread
As that fell queen's,* who every morning spilt
The separate life that warm'd her nightly bed ;—
Closing, with death's cold seal, lips that might tell her
guilt.”

* Semiramis.

XXI.

Then came Neantes, knelt, and bathed with tears,
The lost Zameïa's form ; 'twas dim and cold,—
But the strong cast of beauty still appears,
Though o'er her brow the last chill dew had roll'd.

XXII.

And, as he held the taper hand in his
Of his loved mistress (with a piteous look
On Egla cast), his sole reproach was this :—
Half check'd by rising sobs that burst forth as he spoke :

XXIII.

“ Oh ! warm with health and beauty as thou art
Couldst thou have seen her as I have,—then reft
Of all ;—and known the torments of her heart,
Thou hadst not ta'en what little life was left.”

XXIV.

The attempted deed ;—the scene ;—the bitter word ;—
Like knot of serpents, each with separate sting,
Pierced, each and all, more keenly than a sword,
Through Egla's heart that bled while answering :

“ Cease !—cease !—I kill'd her not !—nor knew such one
There lived on earth. Alas ! her purpose rough,
Would to high heaven, ere she had died, were done !—
Oh ! power that form'd me, was it not enough

“To bear perpetual solitude and gloom?—
Must I too live a theme of foul reproach
To stanger and to slave!—the tomb, the tomb,
Is all I ask—oh! do I ask too much?”—

XXV.

She said and swoon'd: so Helon, not in vain,
Search'd wandering for his guide (he knew not whither),
To lead him to the gates of Ecbatane;
And haply, though unseen, his guide had led him hither.

XXVI.

He saw Zameïa on the earth laid low;
And Egla faint, but fresh in all her charms,
Had sunk beside the corse for weight of woe,
But for the timely aid of his receiving arms.

XXVII.

The groupe—the dead—the form his arms sustain—
The trembling leaves—the twilight's fading gleam—
Confuse;—the youth distrusts both eye and brain,—
For, 'gainst his heart, he sees the image of his dream.

XXVIII.

But faithful Hariph soon was at his side,
In search of whom had Helon chanced to roam;
“Ask nothing, youth, but haste with me;” he cried,
“Life has not left the maiden: bear her home.”

XXIX.

They laid her on her couch ; and in her sire
Found him they sought, and in her dwelling stayed.
Sephora sat her by the perfume fire,
All night, and watch'd her child ;—yet sore afraid

Of her enamoured Spirit ; well she knew
The presence of a mortal vex'd his will,—
And mused on Helon's youth ; and could but view,
In thought, another scene of death and ill.

XXX.

Egla lay drown'd in grief, and could not speak,
But calm'd at morn the tumult of her breast,
And kiss'd her mother thrice ; then bade her seek,
And warn, and save from death, the stranger guest.

XXXI.

And through her window when the deepening glows
Of pensive twilight told another day
Was spent, to bathe that fatal form, she rose,
Bound cincture o'er her robe, and sent her maids away.

XXXII.

Alone she thought how Helon had sustain'd
And saved, for his own doom, her fatal breath ;—
Zameïa—Orpha too—why still remain'd
Her own scorn'd life the cause of so much death ?

XXXIII.

She could not pray ; and to her aching eye
Would come no sweet relief, no wonted tear ;
For one of those dark things that lurk'd, was by,
And whispered thoughts of horror in her ear.

XXXIV.

Then on his sad unguarded victim fix'd ;
And coldly, to her wounded bosom's core,
Infused him like some fell disease, and mix'd
His being with her blood ; all hope was o'er—

All fear—all nature—all was bitterness ;
She felt her heart within her like a clod ;—
And when, at length, the sullen deep distress
Found utterance, thus she spoke ungrateful to her God.

XXXV.

“ Was but my infant life for tortures worse
Than flame or sword preserved ?—on me—on me—
Falls the whole burthen of my nation's curse ?—
Of all offence I bear the misery.

XXXVI.

“ Oh ! power that made, thou'st been profuse of pain
And I have borne—but now is past the hour ;—
I ask no mitigation—that were vain :—
Wreak, wreak on me thy whole avenging power !

XXXVII.

“ Yet, wherefore more the doom I wish delay ?

Dissolve me !—oh ! as earth I was before,
Change this fair-coloured form to silent grey,
And let my weary organs feel no more.”

XXXVIII.

She paused—“ ’Tis written thus : ‘ Thou shalt not kill.’

Yet deeper were the crime to keep a life
Torture to me, to others death and ill ;
So in thy presence, God, I end my nature’s strife !”

XXXIX.

Then from her waist she took the girdle blue,
Look’d on the world without, but breathed no sigh ;
Then calmly o’er the window’s carving threw
That scarf, and round her neck wound thrice the silken
tie.

XL.

Where, in that hour, was Zophiël ? All in vain
He burns with love and jealous rage impell’d :
With the dark Being of the storm again
He strives and struggles in the grove, withheld

From her he loves. He’d seen her borne away,
Even before his eyes ; and now, perforce,
Could only look where, newly-murdered, lay
The lost Zameïa’s pale and breathless corse.

XLI.

Whichever spirit conquers in the strife,
Alas for Egla ! now her hands entwine
The guilty knot—she springs. “ Hold, hold ! thy life,
Maiden, is not thine own, but God’s and mine ! ”

XLII.

’Twas Helon’s voice ; but still the legate fiend,
Reluctant to resign her, would not part ;
But by his secret, subtle nature screen’d,
Even from Spirits, through her brain and heart

Darted like pain. The youth, with firm embrace,
Holds and protects ; but, writhing, vex’d, and thrown,
She could not even look upon his face,
And answer’d all he said but with a moan.

XLIII.

Helon bent o’er and murmur’d, “ Calm those fears :
To be my bride already art thou given !
And I am he who, in thy childish years,
Was in thy grove announced to thee by heaven.”

XLIV.

She seem’d to listen : soon her moans were hush’d ;
She caught his words thus suffering and possest ;
From her torn heart a grateful torrent gush’d,
And love expelled the Demon from her breast.

XLV.

Still Helon held, and sooth'd, and timely drew
Near to the vase of perfumes nightly burning,
And, from his open box of carneol, threw
All it contain'd. 'Twas well :—Zophiël returning

That moment 'scaped from him whose malice held,
Rush'd fiercely anxious to a scene of love
Approved by heaven—oh ! torture ! he beheld
A stranger's arms entwine ! Eager to prove

That power to mortal rival late so fell :
Enough had been a moment for his ire ;
But a strange force he vainly strove to quell,
Insufferable, from the perfume fire,

Rush'd forth, resistless as his maker's breath :
And when he fain would place him by the bed
Which, but to touch, had been gay Meles' death,
He felt him hurl'd away, uttered a shriek, and fled.

XLVI.

But Helon lives, supporting still the maid
O'erwhelmed with hopes and fears, and all o'erspent
With recent pain ; “ Didst hear that shriek ?” he said,
“ The Sprite has left us : kneel with me !” They knelt

Them both to earth,—the bridegroom and his bride,
So fill'd with present joy, the past was dim ;—
'Twas rapture now, whatever might betide,
And pain to her were bliss, so it were shared with him.

LXVII.

Then prayed he : “ Heaven, if either have offended
Punish us now ! avenge ! but with one breath
Let our so-late-united lives be ended !
Let her be mine—and give me life or death ! ”

XLVIII.

Then she : “ If now I die, I die his wife,
And fully blest, O heaven ! await my doom !
Nor would exchange for thousand years of life
The dearer privilege to share his tomb.

XLIX.

“ Yet, if we die not,—Maker, to him give
Light from thy source—so shall my sin be less
In thine account—for oh ! I ne'er can live
Other, with him, than his idolatress.”

L.

“ Let me adore thy image as I gaze
On her fair eyes now raised with mine to thee ;
And let her find, while flow our years and days,
To feed her love some spark of thee in me,”

LI.

(He said): "Thus, as we kneel, no wild desire
Blends with our voices in unhallowed sighs :
Spirit, to thee we quench the nuptial fire—
Look down propitious on the sacrifice !

LII.

"Receive it as a token that our love
Is of the soul ;—and if our lives endure,
Spirit, who sit'st diffusing life above,
Look on our union, and pronounce it pure !"

LIII.

While thus they prayed, Hariph her kindred brought
To listen to them ; thus, as, one by one,
Rose their heart-offerings,—sense subdued by thought ;
"This borne to heaven," he said, "my task is done.

LIV.

"Call me no longer Hariph : I but took,
For love of that young pair, this mortal guise ;
And often have I stood, beside Heaven's book,
And given in record, there, their deeds and sighs.

LV.

"From infancy I've watched them,—far apart,—
Oppress'd by men and fiends ;—yet, form'd to dwell
Soul blent with soul, and beating heart 'gainst heart ;
'Tis done.—Behold the angel Raphaël.

LVI.

“ That blest commission, friend of men, I bear,
To comfort those who undeservedly mourn ;
And every good resolve, kind tear, heart-prayer,
'Tis mine to show before the Eternal's throne.

LVII.

“ And oft I haste, and when the good and true
Are headlong urged to deep pollution, save ;
Just as my wings receive some drops of dew,
Which else must join Asphaltites' black wave,”

LVIII.

He said ; all o'er to radiant beauty warming,
While they, in doubt of what they looked upon,
Beheld a form—dissolving—dazzling—charming—
But, ere their lips found utterance, it was gone. (3)

LIX.

Afar that pitying angel bent his flight,
In anxious search, revolving in his breast
Of a once-heavenly brother's wretched plight ;—
Torn from his last dear hope, where could he rest ?

LX.

Hurl'd, 'gainst his will, the suffering Zophiël went
To the remotest of Egyptia's bounds ;
Demons pursued to view his punishment,
And with his shrieks the desert blast resounds.

LXI.

Dark shadowy fiends, invidious that he joy'd
In love and beauty still, less deeply curst
Than they, of late had leagued them; and employed
All arts to crush and foil. Now, as when first

Expell'd from heaven they saw him writhe; and while
He groans and clasps the earth, sit them beside,
Ask questions of his bliss, and then with smile
Recount his baffled schemes, and linger to deride.

LXII.

And, when they fled, he hid him in a cave,
Strewn with the bones of some sad wretch, who there,
Apart from men, had sought a desert grave,
And yielded to the demon of despair.

LXIII.

There, beauteous Zophiël, shrinking from the ray,
Envyng the wretch that so his life had ended,
Wailed his eternity. He fain would pray,—
But could not pray to one he had offended.

LXIV.

The fiercest pains of death had been relief,
And yet his quenchless being might not end.
Hark! Raphael's voice breaks sweetly on his grief:
"Hope, Zophiël! hope! hope! hope!—thou hast a
friend!" (4)



NOTES

TO

CANTO THE SIXTH.

- (1) “ *The bard has sung, God never formed a soul
Without its own peculiar mate.*”

THE gods (says Plato, in his Banquet) formed man, at first, of a round figure, with two bodies and two sexes; the variety of his powers rendered him so audacious that he made war against his creators. Jupiter was about to destroy him, but, reflecting that with him the whole human race must perish, the god contented himself with merely reducing his strength. The androgyne was accordingly separated in two parts, and Apollo received the order of perfecting them. From that time each part, though become a separate being, seeks, desires, and feels a continual impulse to meet the other.—*See Voyages d'Antenor, tome i, chap. 22.*

Some of the Jewish Rabbins have entertained a similar opinion: according to their accounts, Adam was created male and female, man on one side, woman on the other, and God, afterwards, separated the two forms that were before united.

“Les androgynes avoit deux sexes, deux têtes, quatre bras, quatre pieds.”—*Voyages d'Antenor, —see Note to vol. 1.*

It was evidently from such opinions, as well as his own feelings, that Dr Watts conceived the idea of that popular little poem, which he has called the “Indian Philosopher.”

The different accounts of creation are sufficiently amusing. It is said, in the Talmud, that God did not wish to create woman, because he foresaw that her husband would very soon have to com-

plain of her perversity; he therefore waited till Adam asked her of him, and then took every precaution to make her as good as possible. He would not take her from the head, lest she should have sufficient wit and spirit to become a coquette; nor from the eyes, lest she should cast mischievous glances; nor from the *mouth*, lest she should listen at doors; nor from the heart, lest she should be jealous; nor from the hands or the feet, lest she should be a thief or a runaway; but every precaution was vain: she had all these defects, although drawn from the most quiet and honest part that could possibly be found about Adam.—This is merely translated from M. de Lentier.

- (2) “*And formed, in every fibre, for such love
As heaven not yet had given her to share.*”

Souls, according to Plato, are rays of the divinity, which, ere they are shut up in the gross envelope of mortality, pass through a state of existence, during which an invincible attraction unites them, two by two, and inflames them with a love pure and celestial. When embodied upon earth, these souls, thus previously united, continually seek and feel a propensity for each other, and, unless they are so happy as to meet, can never be animated by a true and genuine affection.

- (3) “*He said all o’er to radiant beauty warming,
While they, in doubt of what they looked upon,
Beheld a form,—dissolving—dazzling—charming—
But, ere their lips found utterance, it was gone.*”

Flesh is said to be composed of carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen: if men have already been able to discover its materials, the power of making and dissolving it at pleasure, may, without inconsistency, be ascribed to beings so much superior to them as angels have ever been thought. Indeed the supposition of such a power is the only thing that can give the least semblance of possibility to what has been related of good and evil angels.

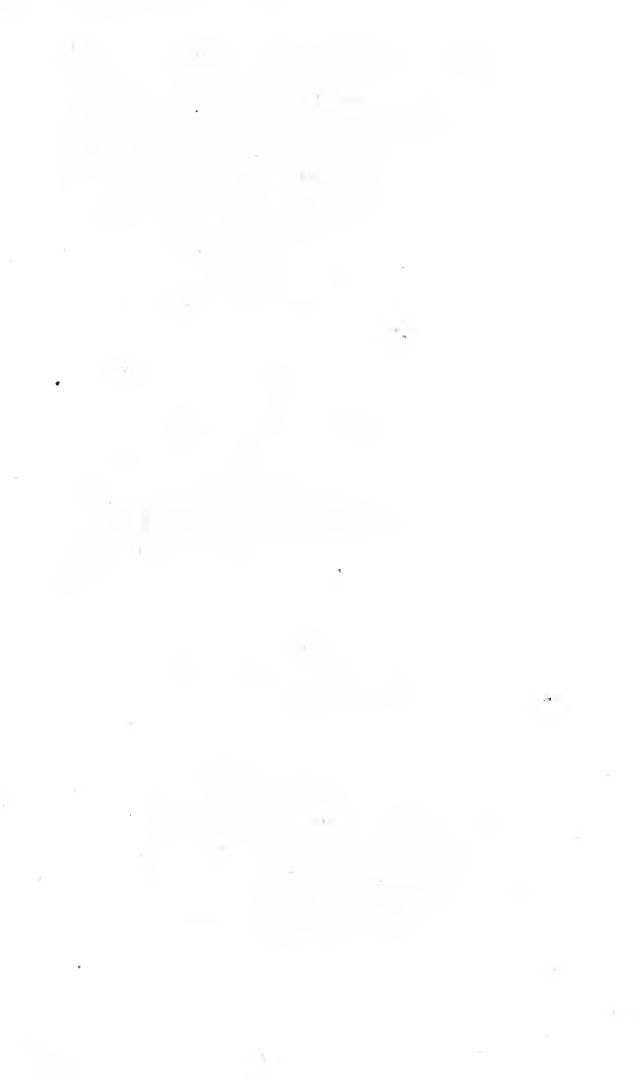
The following passage, extracted by Brucker, from the writings of Bonaventura, looks as reasonable as anything which has ever yet been said concerning the mysterious union of spirit and body. "The formal principles of bodies are celestial bodies, which by their accession or recession cause the production or corruption of the inferior; it may, therefore, be concluded that there is in these occult forms a capacity of being restored to higher principles, namely celestial bodies, or to powers still higher than these—that is, to separate intellectual substances, which in their respective operations leave traces of themselves."

(4) "*Hope, Zophiël! hope! hope! hope! thou hast a friend!*"

As Zophiël appears to have no evil propensity, and commits only such crimes as are occasioned by the violence of his love; Raphaël may think it possible to induce him to repent, and ultimately obtain pardon. Haruth and Maruth were condemned for a time to inhabit a cavern beneath the tower of Babel, with the permission of returning to heaven after a proper expiation of their offences. Their appearance in this cavern is beautifully represented in 'Thalaba.' These angels, according to the story, had obtained while in heaven such a reputation for wisdom that they were sent on earth to judge the whole race of men. They soon, however, became so enamoured of the beautiful Zohara that she obtained from them *the most holy of secrets*.

The notes of Zophiël were written some in Cuba, some in Canada, some at Hanover, United States, some at Paris, and the last at Keswick, England, under the kind encouragement of Robert Southey, Esq.; and near a window which overlooks the beautiful lake Derwent, and the finest groups of those mountains which encircle completely that charming valley where the Greta winds over its bed of clean pebbles, looking as clear as dew.

April 15, 1831.



MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.



MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

COMPOSED AT THE REQUEST OF A LADY, AND DESCRIPTIVE
OF HER FEELINGS.

SHE RETURNED TO THE NORTH, AND DIED SOON AFTER.

ADIEU, fair isle! I love thy bowers,
I love thy dark-eyed daughters there;
The cool pomegranate's scarlet flowers
Look brighter in their jetty hair.

They praised my forehead's stainless white;
And when I thirsted, gave a draught
From the full clustering cocoa's height,
And smiling, blessed me as I quaff'd.

Well pleased, the kind return I gave,
And, clasped in their embraces' twine,
Felt the soft breeze, like Lethe's wave,
Becalm this beating heart of mine.

Why will my heart so wildly beat?
Say, Seraphs, is my lot too blest,
That thus a fitful, feverish heat
Must rifle me of health and rest?

Alas ! I fear my native snows—
A clime too cold, a heart too warm—
Alternate chills—alternate glows—
Too fiercely threat my flower-like form.

The orange-tree has fruit and flowers ;
The grenadilla,* in its bloom,
Hangs o'er its high, luxuriant bowers,
Like fringes from a Tyrian loom.

When the white coffee-blossoms swell,
The fair moon full, the evening long,
I love to hear the warbling bell,†
And sun-burnt peasant's wayward song.

* The grenadilla is a melon produced from a blossom more rich and beautiful than it is easy to describe. Though much larger, it resembles the cerulean passion-flower so nearly as to seem of the same species ; but the leaf of its vine is curled, and of a very different shape.

† The word 'warbling' expresses, with more truth than any other, the sound which these bells really produce. The dwelling where I have listened to them with most pleasure, was placed about half a mile from the road where the Montéros travelled, by moonlight, as they often do, in Cuba, to avoid the intense heat of the sun. The sound of their bells, heard at such a distance, was so soft and musical, that it might have been mistaken for the noise of a small stream running over a bed of pebbles. The evenings were sometimes so calm, that many words of their songs distinctly reached the ear.

Drive gently on, dark muleteer,
And the light seguidilla frame :
Fain would I listen still, to hear
At every close thy mistress' name.

Adieu, fair isle ! the waving palm
Is pencilled on thy purest sky ;
Warm sleeps the bay, the air is balm,
And, soothed to languor, scarce a sigh

Escapes for those I love so well,
For those I've loved and left so long,
On me their fondest musings dwell,
To them alone my sighs belong.

On, on, my bark ! blow southern breeze !
No longer would I lingering stay ;
'Twere better far *to die* with these
Than *live in pleasure* far away.

Cuba, April 1827.

FROM GERMAN VERSES, BY BARON JOSEPH DE PALM.

I SAW a little pensive flower,
So delicate in form and hue,
I sighed to pluck—but had not power,
For on a rocky steep it grew.

Beneath the rude uncertain height
Awhile I stood, with soul and eyes
Enchained by wonder and delight;
Then, rushed to climb the precipice.

Upon the beauteous prize intent,
Wildly I plied both strength and art;
But a deep boding sentiment
Was heavy at my anxious heart.

Near to the little flower I drew—
I almost gained the dangerous brink;
But the old crag from which it grew
And looked so fair began to sink.

Warm with the hope which just had birth,
I strove to clasp—an effort gave—
'Twas gone—it sank into the earth,
And left me but an open grave.

Paris, Feb. 9, 1831.

FROM GERMAN VERSES, BY BARON JOSEPH DE PALM.

SLOW was the step that drew me from
The loved enclosure of my home ;
My heavy heart heaved with a sigh,
And gathering drops obscured my eye.

I paused, amid the well-known track,
Stood still awhile—then started back ;
A rose bent forth and beckoned me—
Fondly I looked—the rose was she.

A nightingale leaned from his spray
And sang to me so sweet a lay,
That, lost in silent ecstasy,
I turned—the nightingale was she.

A little star, that, still on high,
Was trembling in the morning sky,
Bowed, as I looked, inviting me
To stay—the little star was she.

The sun that rose with kindly glow,
Wrote with his beams : no farther go—
I could but rest awhile to see—
Yet, wherefore read ?—the sun was she.

The plain, with more than wonted smile,
Wooed me to wander back awhile ;—
Gazing on dew, and flower, and bee,
I lingered still—the plain was she.

Nature had caught me in her arms,
And twined me in a net of charms ;
I felt my steps no longer free,
And stopt surprised—Nature was she.

All—all combined—I faintly strove,
Enthralled, entranced, I could not move :
Rose, nightingale, star, sun, plain, tree—
The whole sweet universe was she.

Paris, Feb. 30, 1833.

S O N G.

Oh, moon of flowers ! sweet moon of flowers,*
Why dost thou mind me of the hours
Which flew so softly on that night
When last I saw and felt thy light ?

Oh, moon of flowers ! thou moon of flowers,
Would thou couldst give me back those hours,
Since which a dull cold year has fled
Or show me those with whom they sped !

Oh, moon of flowers ! oh, moon of flowers !
In scenes afar were past those hours,
Which still with fond regret I see,
And wish my heart could change like thee !

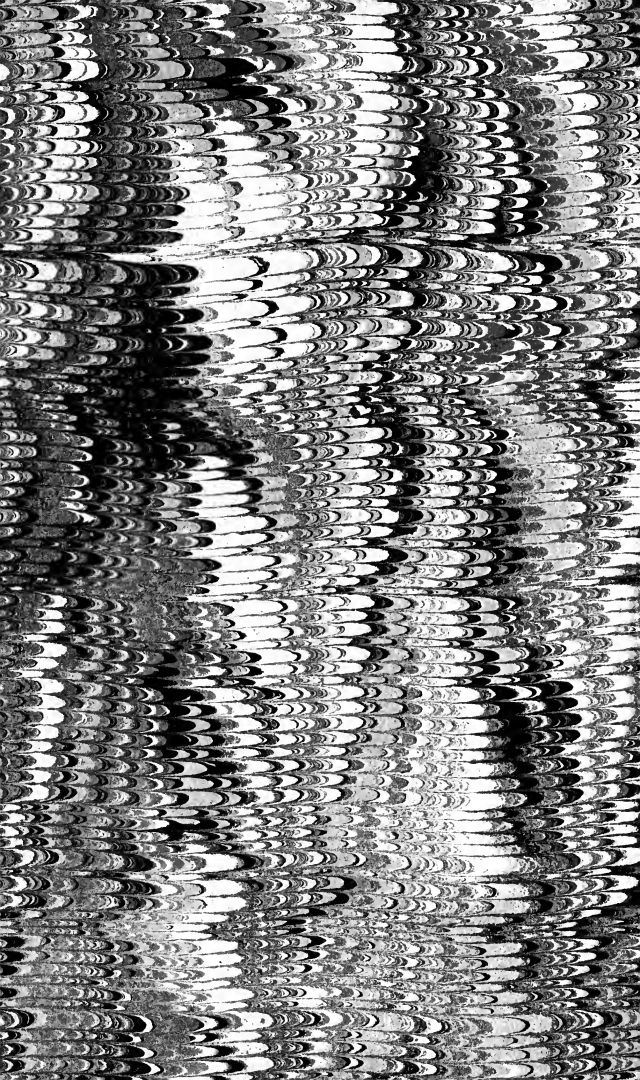
* The savages of the northern part of America sometimes count by moons. May is called by them the moon of flowers, and October the moon of falling leaves.

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